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# THE Y.M.C.A. AND SOCIAL NEED

*A Study of Institutional Adaptation*



MANAGERS' CITY

# THE Y.M.C.A. AND SOCIAL NEED

*A Study of Institutional Adaptation*

by

OWEN E. PENCE

DIRECTOR OF THE BUREAU OF RECORDS, STUDIES, AND TRENDS  
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE Y.M.C.A.'S

*Foreword by*

WILLIAM E. SPEERS

CHAIRMAN OF THE NATIONAL BOARD  
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE Y.M.C.A.'S

1939

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## FOREWORD

**A**DAPTABILITY is a cardinal virtue to these changing times. A college president recently said that perfection of scholarship and character was too brittle an ideal to set up alone, in these times. Wherefore that college is attempting to add adaptability to the equipment with which they send their students forth.

What is true for a student holds also for an organization. In this volume Mr. Pence has given us a careful study of the evolution of the philosophy of our Y.M.C.A.'s to meet changes that have come about in community relationships. It is heartening to read of the resiliency and resourcefulness with which our organization has made adjustments in meeting new problems.

The future of the Y.M.C.A. is in the hands of the laymen as well as of the staff. This book should be of great value to staff and laymen alike, for it is the sort of history of our Movement that history should be—not dates and battles, but the evolution of ideas.

The way in which Mr. Pence has traced the development of the Y.M.C.A. in our country—beginning with the first small groups of young men meeting in the larger cities for mutual help in leading a Christian life, up through the stages by which it has reached its present highly institutionalized form—should be of great interest to every man who is playing a part in the Y.M.C.A. today. Especially useful will be a thoughtful consideration of the chapters in the latter part of the book, dealing with the way in which the Y.M.C.A. has adapted itself to the changing problems of youth in our present-day setting. Mr. Pence has been particularly objective in his portrayal both of those ways in which we have failed and those ways in which we have succeeded in developing a program of vital interest to young men and at the same time following the original objective of the Movement.

Mr. Pence's book should be recommended, if not required, reading for all of us who consider and decide upon the business of the Y.M.C.A. today, and in so doing, take our share in writing another important page in its history.

That the current period is important few will question. Never before in our history have social changes so suddenly and profoundly affected our youth. The recognition by Y.M.C.A. boards of adjustments adequate for the new situation is urgently needed, if not overdue. This book is a basic new resource to aid us in making those adjustments.

WILLIAM E. SPEERS

New York,  
February 15, 1939.



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## PREFACE

**I**F THE dictum that "an institution is but the lengthened shadow of a man" could be relied upon, this volume might conceivably have been a biography. But the story of the Young Men's Christian Association is too varied and extensive so to be understood.

The development of the Association in the United States over the past eighty-eight years has necessarily been a complex one. To document and interpret its chronological growth would obviously have required a comprehensive history. The present volume does not attempt such a history. The very elaboration of the account would tend to obscure many of the salient aspects of its behavior as a whole.

It is, then, neither in terms of history as such, nor as biography, that this volume approaches the Y.M.C.A., but in terms of its behavior as a social institution. In particular, the marked evidences of institutional tendency became an object of special interest to one concerned, from an educational standpoint, to examine how far it may lie within the genius of the Association to make timely adaptation to social need, particularly among youth.

Such an undertaking might seem inadvisable for one long associated professionally with the agency to be examined. Despite all efforts toward objectivity, it would surely appear impossible without the critical resources of a university. The writer has been most fortunate and is deeply gratified for the patient, untiring counsel and criticism of Professor William H. Kilpatrick, of Teachers College, Columbia University, who sponsored the study and gave it over several years far more than casual interest. The writer must also acknowledge his debt to Professors John L. Childs and F. Ernest Johnson, of Teachers College, who gave valuable criticism and encouragement, and to Dr. Robert S. Lynd, of Columbia University, who gave useful counsel regarding the plan of the study.

Finally, the author must express his gratitude to the leaders and staff of the National Council of Y.M.C.A.'s for access to valuable materials needed for the study, and especially to John E. Manley, General Secretary of the International Committee, Jay A. Urice, Executive Secretary of the National Board, and Spurgeon M. Keeny, Director of Association Press. These friendly colleagues have reviewed and criticized the entire manuscript again and again, yet have generously granted the author full freedom in developing the critical analysis that seemed to him essential. Accordingly the author alone must bear the responsibility for the resulting treatment.

If, in so treating of the nature and processes of the Young Men's Christian Association in the United States, the many friends of the Movement miss the note of eulogy that some readers cherish, let it be understood that its introduction would have been alien to the chief purpose of a review already grown too long. Moreover, it is the hope of the author that such a critical review may assist discerning leaders, both lay and professional, to a deeper understanding of the Young Men's Christian Association as it has come down to the present, and to a resoluteness of spirit regarding some of the more important adjustments needed in our time.

OWEN E. PENCE

Special appreciation and thanks are expressed to Miss Charlotte Feeney for her intelligent and painstaking work in organizing the Index, and to Mr. Ralph A. Beebe for his highly competent technical service in the preparation of the manuscript for printing.

O. E. P.

## CHAPTER I

# GENERAL INTRODUCTION

**T**HIS volume is not a comprehensive history. It does not attempt to include the whole of a continuous account of the life and activity of the American Young Men's Christian Association. It is rather an examination of certain internal and external factors that have made for continuity and for change in the organization under study. In brief, it is a study of institutional adaptation on the part of the American Y.M.C.A. It seeks to contribute to better understanding of the essential elements making for continuity and change, and to suggest ways by which it may be possible for the present-day Young Men's Christian Association to make such further timely changes as may be needed in keeping with its historic character, its chosen mission, and its opportunities.

In the ninety-five years since its founding in London, the Young Men's Christian Association has become a world-wide organization. According to the most recent information available from the World's Alliance of Young Men's Christian Associations, the organized life of this society may be found in sixty-six countries, and in every continent. Some 10,308 Associations were reported, having 1,761,456 members, and 5,546 paid officers. Of these, the Associations of the United States represented in the year 1936: 1,121,009 members and 3,765 paid officers, in 1,082 reporting Associations (*117, 1937*, p. 23).<sup>1</sup> The World's Alliance of Y.M.C.A.'s, of which the National Council of the United States is a part, is a somewhat loose federation of national unions organized in 1855. Members designated by the U. S. National Council sit on the Executive Committee of the World's Alliance, attend its rather infrequent conferences, and share in its world-wide work. Increasingly, conditions affecting the youth of the world call for consultation and planning by these Christian organizations, and a sense of world fellowship is evident.

Various considerations make it desirable to limit this study to the American Associations, meaning more particularly the Associations of the United States. Specifically, the Y.M.C.A. in the United States has a fairly unified development growing out of the peculiar social and religious conditions here. True enough, from their beginnings on

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<sup>1</sup> Italic figures in parentheses refer to numbered items in the Selected Reference List at the end of the book.

this continent in 1851, the Associations of the United States and Canada have maintained very close organic relations down to fairly recent years. They still do so in many specific undertakings. There may be occasional references to the Canadian Associations during the periods in which they were included with the Associations of the United States in a single Association Movement. There will be no attempt, however, to deal with the Canadian Associations as such, nor with the national organization of these Associations in terms of their unique structure, aims, or problems.

In the United States, for the calendar year 1937, a total of 1,154 Associations was reported. Of these, 754 were in cities, of which 55 were for Negroes; 129 were at railway centers; 162 were in colleges and universities (as well as a considerable additional number known to exist but not reporting); 77 were in town and country districts; and 32 were in or near army and navy posts for service among the armed forces. For the year 1937, these hundreds of local Associations reported, among other activities, more than one hundred thousand groups in their varied programs; members in excess of 1,184,000; thousands of additional persons in activities; and expenditures for the year exceeding 47 millions.

### 1. *Method of Approach*

The approach to the study requires examination of the entire eighty-eight-year history of the Y.M.C.A. in North America. This undertaking appears feasible only when certain general 'periods' are recognized as follows:

- An Introductory period from 1851 through the Civil War;
- A period of Establishment from 1866 down to about 1900;
- A period of Expansion from 1900 through the World War;
- A period of Readjustment from the World War to the present.

These periods do not embrace identical time-spans, but within each of them a broad unity of organizational behavior will later be shown. There may be a certain danger in assuming that the apparent unity in the complex events of such periods of organizational development is really significant. The writer must assume responsibility for defending whatever significance he attaches to them.

Chapters II to V inclusive are devoted to the Association trends for the periods recognized with attention sharply directed toward emerging forms of institutional behavior. Chapter VI presents, all too meagerly, certain particularly significant aspects of the social background of this developing institutionalism. In Chapter VII are summarized some of the major institutional patterns disclosed in the course of the historical review. The nature of adaptive processes involved in institutional adjustment, and the possibility of more intelligent control of

institutional adaptation "from within" are examined in Chapter VIII. In the final Chapter, certain issues that have emerged from the institutional history are discussed in terms of alternatives for the future. There is no attempt to include reference to a great many individuals who have played formative rôles in the leadership of the Y.M.C.A.—men who in any adequate history of the Movement should be pictured critically and appreciatively. Occasional mention of certain of such leaders is only incidental.

The interpretation is that of a participant-observer. In a time when the virtues of objectivity are extolled more often than attained, it would be folly to claim that such a treatment as this volume presents is absolutely objective. Although freely admitting the possibility of bias, the writer may be equally forthright in attempting to allow for it. In attempting so to compensate for it, there is a kindred possibility of over-compensating—that is, of becoming so intent upon the adverse aspects of some development or policy that its intrinsic merit is obscured if not denied. The reader must judge whether the writer's effort to concentrate upon the evidence of institutional patterns in the record itself has afforded a sufficient safeguard against what, without honest effort toward objectivity, would be an intolerable abuse of both the record and the social obligation of authorship.

## 2. *Delimitation and Definition*

The study is neither a history, a statistical survey, nor a comparative analysis, though elements of each are involved. It is primarily an educational study concerned to foster more intelligent, internally controlled guidance of Association affairs. In a voluntary association, such as the Young Men's Christian Association, all comprised therein are necessarily under the influence of experiences that have some educative significance. That significance may be greater or less, as the experiences are more or less interesting and significant to the individuals and groups which participate. The study is concerned with the experience of the hundreds of thousands of persons, chiefly youth, who make up the hundred thousand and more groups sponsored by the Associations of the present day. The question is, "How can the structure and functioning of the greater Association be made to facilitate more useful experience for all involved?" In particular, the writer is concerned that institutional behavior shall if possible promote, or at least not retard unduly, the adjustment of modes of corporate activity to the demands of the present time. The appreciation and utilization of such objectives will come only through educational processes that seek to develop insight, concern, action.

It is sometimes doubted whether it is possible to study the behavior of a great association fruitfully. Might it not perhaps be more productive, rather, to concentrate upon individual associations or groups?

However, some excellent studies of small groups have already been made (51). There is also some evidence that an increasing amount of study is likely to be given to the group experience of individuals, and to the educational management of group situations. Each group under an organization's auspices, being made up of unique persons, is itself unique. It is readily admitted that only meticulous case reports for each particular group will yield the record by which fully to understand its unique problems, its always novel behavior, its contribution to socialization and to desirable character. But beyond any particular club grouping are still other groups. Sometimes many groups are sponsored or shaped by particular auspices, leaders, authorities. What these auspices stand for, what these leaders believe and teach, and what these authorities require, often need to be understood in terms broader than any particular locality. When an organized Association that first took shape in numerous localities achieves some measure of national integration, its examination as a whole becomes necessary to genuine understanding.

If the study rightly includes all Y.M.C.A.'s in the United States and their behavior as a single Movement, may it not be a task too comprehensive to attempt to review organizational development over nearly a century? Would not a much shorter period yield itself to more intensive examination? In answer, it appears inevitable that any adequate investigation of institutional forms must extend throughout the period of their development. Some considerable part of the really influential modes of organized life in the Y.M.C.A. probably had their inception back toward the beginnings. A study of their present manifestations would be hazarding much if it did not seek their understanding at the source. Others may think it more urgent to examine in greater detail some of the current timely aspects of the organization's life. Such an investigation might deal with the relations with other similar agencies in the community, or with expanding public services, or with religious emphasis. In each case, however, it has appeared to be of primary urgency to understand the nature of the organization itself in terms of its developmental manifestations if one is to assay whatever present capacity it may have for modifying its method, its structure, its tempo, its relationships, its directions.

There may be some who consider that to examine a single organization with a traditional religious approach is to entail at least a lack of objectivity, and at worst intolerable bias or perhaps bigotry. The reader must judge from the treatment itself how far the writer has escaped this danger. However, the particular religious history of the Y.M.C.A. is perhaps too closely associated with the American historical development as a whole to require defense for its characteristic nature. Whatever the content of its formulated religious purposes, or whatever its connections with the Church, this organization has lived only through the persons who have composed it. Decade after decade such

persons as citizens of this democracy were expressing in this and other associated effort an indigenous quality natural to the soil of American culture. Whatever they may have brought to this particular Association, put into it, received from it, they also got, gave, and took as Americans rooted in the common life. This particular Association has been, and now is, germane to that culture. It may be, therefore, that this study of a single organization and the patterns of institutional action it has developed, will have some significance for other voluntary associations in that culture operating also as non-profit agencies in religious, educational, recreational, and welfare fields.

One does not assume to trace and prove correlation between the broader social development and the behavior of this particular organization. The relationship between organizational affairs and prior or current social conditions would be difficult to show with certainty. Social causation is a complex problem. That there is an important degree of correspondence between what is happening in the culture and what people think is, of course, self-evident. Interactions with the total environment, near and remote, which impinge upon and condition individual behavior are assumed, in this study, to affect in greater or less degree, all of the individual's relationships and all associative activity. Both as an individual, and as a member of one or more groups, he is both initiator and receiver of potent stimuli which affect what he is and becomes, and therefore can next do.

Some of the institutional effects of such marked social events as the Civil War or the World War may also be identified with assurance. The rise of the American city presents another example of close relationship with the Association because it was greatly concerned with young men away from home who had become concentrated in the great cities. The very form of the buildings subsequently erected around the special needs of such young men offers further evidence of relationship between organization and environment. To locate the factors that determined the direction of social adaptation of the Y.M.C.A., however, would be far more difficult. The study does not attempt to go beyond the citing of correspondence here and there, and to make inferences that seem based upon sound psychological premises.

Finally, it is necessary to take particular account of the conception of "institution," which becomes somewhat pivotal for the present treatment. The word "institution" has been given many meanings, some of them misleading. As here used, it does not imply those services and points of view associated with the physical plant or building as such. The usage is rather that of modern sociology, in which the institution is seen as the establishment of specialized procedures for the accomplishment of its purposes as a voluntary association. The writer accepts the view of Professor Robert M. MacIver, who defines the terms "association" and "institution" in ways that have significant meaning for the present study:

As association is a group specifically organized for the pursuit of an interest or group of interests in common. . . . It is not a community, but an organization within the community. . . . Because an association is organized for particular purposes, we belong to it only by virtue of these purposes. . . . We are born into communities, but we create or are elected into associations. . . . All other associations [than the state] in a modern society at least, are voluntary. . . . Though an association has in truth no purposes that are not the purposes of some or all of its members, it has methods of operation peculiar to it as an association.

By institutions we mean the established forms or conditions of procedure characteristic of group activity. . . . Every association has, in respect of its particular interest, its characteristic institutions.

If we are considering something as an organized group, it is an association; if as a mode or means of service, it is an institution.

We cannot belong to an institution (22, p. 11ff.).

If the assumptions of the MacIver analysis are permitted as a basis for proceeding, it will be later shown that they are both pivotal and valid for examining the social development of such an organization as the Young Men's Christian Association.

## CHAPTER II

# INTRODUCTORY PERIOD

*From the Founding Through the Civil War*

THE YEARS from 1850 to the Civil War witnessed the development on American soil of a somewhat novel type of association which, in a relatively short period, not only found expression in hundreds of cities and towns, but established the wider relationships of what sociologists call a "great association." Elements of a prior readiness in the social setting undoubtedly influenced this rapid development.

### I. THE ADVENT AND EXTENSION OF LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS

In this chapter the development of local Young Men's Christian Associations is examined. The emergence of a distinctive "movement" character and appropriate organization will be observed as well as the appearance of institutional characters. The Civil War in its relation to the life and future of the Association will receive attention.

The particular pattern of these new societies of younger men was not unique on American soil. The London Association, founded in 1844 by George Williams and his friends employed by Hitchcock and Company (109 and 170), a drapery establishment, was known and enthusiastically described by young men from America visiting in the British Isles.

Even as early as 1849

a letter was received [in England] from a gentleman in America who, having attended the meetings in Radley's Hotel, had been encouraged to unite the efforts of young men in his own city, Lowell, Mass., for their religious improvement and the benefit of their fellows (89, p. 116).

George M. Vanderlip, a student from New York City, carried on his studies in Edinburgh in 1849-50. During this time he visited the six-year-old London Young Men's Christian Association. In June, 1850, he wrote an extended and highly favorable account of the Association and its attractive rooms, sending it to a prominent church paper, the *Watchman and Reflector*, of Boston. Though the letter was not published for nearly a year, its stirring account of the new society, its quarters with library and refreshment room, its classes, its religious

character (described "as its peculiar glory"), its lectures, its strong support by evangelical churchmen, all had a great effect in America. Said Vanderlip, "there is scarcely a commercial house in London without one or more 'missionaries' among their clerks. Young men come up from the country to London, and many are led at once out of temptation. Instead of snares, they find friends who have provided a delightful place, and a delightful way to spend leisure hours" (87, p. 112).

George H. Petrie, of New York, spent 1850-51 in London, and was brought into contact with the active leaders of the young Association there. In a letter written later to Robert McBurney, he recalls his experience:

Impressed with the thought that New York City greatly needed such an organization, on my return from London in the autumn of 1851, I at once deliberated as to the best course to pursue in order to attain this object, and to establish an association on a solid and permanent basis. I well remember the first evening's consultation with Messrs. H. K. Bull, Milton St. John, and Oliver P. Woodford, before whom the whole subject was plainly stated (November 1851). Although these gentlemen's Christian love and impulses were strongly favorable to the movement, I confess a feeling of disappointment came over me that they did not so enthusiastically enter into the idea of our city's need for a Young Men's Christian Association. This feeling, however, soon passed away, as the subsequent action of these gentlemen proved them to be considerate and hearty espousers of the object (152, p. 30).

Discussions continued, in which ministers took part, some of whom favored, some of whom opposed the suggestion. Finally, in Mr. Petrie's home, April 21, 1852, a preliminary organization meeting was held at which the following action was taken:

**RESOLVED** that the young men now assembled deem it desirable that an association be formed, consisting of members of evangelical churches in this city, to be called the New York Young Men's Christian Association, which shall be conducted on a plan resembling that of similar societies in London and other large cities, and that we invite the co-operation of the Christian young men of this city for the accomplishment of this purpose (152, p. 30).

In the meantime, groups at both Montreal and Boston, moving quite independently save in respect of their common response to the values they saw in the London Association, had already formally established similar groups on November 25th, and December 29th, respectively, of 1851; and had designated them as Young Men's Christian Associations.

One of the earliest actions of the members of the newly organized Boston Association, confident in their belief in the values they were experiencing for groups of young men in other cities, was to authorize

a Committee on Publication, which published and distributed thousands of copies of the new local constitution. It is said that one was sent to every pastor in New England. The constitution was regarded as a model everywhere, and new Associations sprang up in many parts of Canada and the United States patterned after it (99, p. 15).

One of these copies of the Boston constitution fell into the hands of a minister in Washington, D. C. He gave it to two young men of his congregation, who in turn

took the task upon themselves alone, against the advice of every pastor whom they were able to consult except their own, and with but this single voice of encouragement—called a meeting and laid the proposition before the strangers—now such close friends and brothers—there assembled. Finally, on the 29th of June, amid doubts and distrust on the part of most of the clergy, who believed that such a society could never be maintained in a city of so unsettled a population, the Washington Association was formed. (Report of Y.M.C.A. International Convention, 1855, p. 88. Subsequent references to these conventions and to the National Council of the United States are designated simply by the year and page number: e.g., 1855, p. 92.)

During the second year, 1852, similar local Associations were formed in:

- Springfield and Worcester, Massachusetts;
- Buffalo and New York City, New York;
- Concord, New Hampshire (also in Portsmouth in a single church);
- Detroit, Michigan;
- New Orleans, Louisiana.

In the third year, 1853, the following came into being:

- Providence, Rhode Island;
- Baltimore, Maryland;
- Alexandria, Virginia;
- Chicago, Peoria, and Quincy, Illinois;
- Brooklyn, New York;
- Portland, Maine;
- Louisville and Lexington, Kentucky;
- San Francisco, California.

In the formal summary of these new organizational developments made in 1855 the following resumé is given (1855, p. 92):

Associations Organized in 1851—	2
“ “ “	1852—10
“ “ “	1853—15
“ “ “	1854—26

Total

53 Associations

By 1865, a list was published of all Associations that were known to have come into existence. On it were the names of 156 Associations located in 31 of the then 36 states, the District of Columbia, and four Canadian provinces (or sections such as Canada East and Canada West) (1865, p. 18).

Some of these newly formed local fellowships led a brief and precarious existence. It is entirely possible that such would have been the fate of most or all of these new youth societies had not a new strength and cohesion appeared. The calling of the first convention of these Associations in 1854 met with reluctant response from some of the Associations, but agreement was finally reached to form a "Confederation," and establish a "Central Committee." At the first Convention in Buffalo in 1854, 37 delegates from 19 Associations attended. What were these early Associations like? In the early Conventions it was the custom for delegates to give oral and, later, more formal written reports on the work of their respective local societies. Two of these reports are given to illustrate the nature and outlook of the participating Associations.

Portland, Maine, reported by Lyford:

The existence of similar institutions elsewhere naturally suggested the formation of our Association. It was thought by some that the time had not yet arrived when such an institution was demanded; but as a respectable number of warmhearted young men thought otherwise, a preliminary meeting was called in October, 1853; and on the 9th of November following, our Association was organized.

The form of our organization is like that of most others in this country. We have two classes of members—active and associate. Active members must be members of evangelical churches; associate members must be moral young men. Associate members are entitled to all the privileges of active members, except voting and holding office. The payment of twenty dollars into the treasury of the Association in addition to the above qualifications, constitutes the donor a life member.

Our rooms are admirably located and tastefully furnished at an expense of about nine hundred dollars. . . . Our reading room is already supplied with a selection of journals and periodicals. We have not yet begun to collect a library, but intend to make a vigorous effort in that direction soon.

We have a monthly meeting for business, and prayer meeting every Wednesday evening. Our prayer meetings are well attended and very interesting.

Since our organization, several young men who were received as associate members have become active members, having become hopefully converted and united with evangelical churches; and we are permitted to believe that, under a kind of Providence in

some instances this result may be traced to the influence of our Association (1854, p. 16).

Cincinnati, Ohio, reported by Lowry:

The Cincinnati Society of Religious Inquiry and Young Men's Christian Union was organized in October, 1848, by a few young men in that city for the purpose of mutual improvement and encouragement in their Christian course, as well as to afford them facilities of usefulness to their young associates and others whom their influence might reach. The latter clause of the name was added in February, 1853, but no change was made in its object or plan.

Early adopting the principles of Christian union, it has welcomed into its ranks young men of all denominations, who have prosecuted their labors in harmony, and with considerable success. Having no precedent to guide them, its founders trusted to experience to indicate the best mode of accomplishing their object, and relying mainly on their own exertions, with the blessing of God, have progressed steadily to the present time.

While cultivating a spirit of friendship and sympathy with recent associations similar in character, and with which it is in many respects identical, it also possesses some peculiarities, arising from its early and original organization. It has no Board of Managers, but all business is transacted at regular meetings of the society. These are held semi-monthly, and are varied with essays, reports, and devotional services. The advantage of this is that it secures a full attendance, and each member is encouraged to take part and feel an interest in all its proceedings.

It has a system of reporting religious and missionary intelligence which affords a profitable exercise for members, and gives variety to the meetings. It establishes mission Sabbath Schools in destitute parts of the city, which are conducted by members of the society, under its direction, upon union principles.

It *requires* its members to sustain its enterprises and promote its interests by their personal efforts. Although their labors are voluntary, they are expected to discharge any duty assigned to them, unless excused for satisfactory reasons. This tends to lessen the number of members, but greatly increases their efficiency. In other parts of the plan, and in the means used for social and spiritual improvement of young men, it follows the general outline adopted by kindred societies.

The society has rooms in a most eligible location, handsomely furnished, and well adapted to its purpose, which are open every evening. The library contains 400 volumes of select works, and the reading room 40 papers and magazines of suitable character. The number of Sabbath Schools is seven, containing between five and six hundred scholars. Addresses are delivered and prayer meetings held from time to time as may appear desirable. The number of members is about 70, besides honorary and associate members (1854, p. 22).

For a study of the institutional pattern relating to the organization of local Associations that finally emerged, see pp. 245-249.<sup>1</sup>

### 1. *Clarifying Aims and Membership Conceptions*

The American Associations, though profoundly influenced by the example of the London Association, did not hesitate to adapt both objectives and methods to their own requirements.

The original Association in London had stated that its objective was

To improve the spiritual condition of young men engaged in the drapery and other trades (109).

The Boston group had expanded this statement significantly:

and its object shall be the improvement of the spiritual and mental condition of the young men (86, p. 107).

In the same way, the New York group, impressed by the conditions surrounding the life of young men, had further developed the scope of the objective:

The object of this Association shall be the improvement of the spiritual, mental, and social condition of young men, by the ways and means hereafter designated.

and added, in their specification of purpose, the following:

The members of the Association shall seek out young men taking up their residence in New York and its vicinity, and endeavor to bring them under moral and religious influences, by aiding them in the selection of suitable boarding places and employment, by introducing them to the members and privileges of this Association, and by every means in their power surrounding them with Christian associates (152, p. 33).

It was a natural development, shortly afterward in 1866, that this statement of objectives should be amended to include the word "physical" and become one of the earliest formulations of what became widely influential as the fourfold aim of practically all Association effort (p. 235).

Inasmuch as the widely circulated Boston constitution was so often copied by other Associations, it will be useful to introduce its essential provisions here (86, p. 107):

#### PREAMBLE

"We, the subscribers, led by a strong desire for the promotion of evangelical religion among the young men of this city, and impressed with the importance of concentrated

<sup>1</sup> Subsequently, simple page numbers are cross-references to closely related discussions elsewhere in this book.

effort, both for our own spiritual welfare and that of those from without, who may be brought under our influence, and desirous of forming an Association in which we may together labor for the accomplishment of the great end proposed, here adopt for our united government the following

#### CONSTITUTION

##### Article I—(Title and Object)

The name of this society shall be the "Boston Young Men's Christian Association," and its object the improvement of the spiritual and mental condition of young men.

##### Article II—(Members)

Section 1. *Active Members.* Any young man who is a member in regular standing of an evangelical church may become an active member of this Association by payment of one dollar annually. Active members only shall have the right to vote and be eligible to office.

Section 2. *Associate Members.* Any young man of good moral character may become a member of this Association by the payment of one dollar annually, and shall be entitled to all the privileges of the Association, eligibility to office and the right to vote only excepted.

##### Article III—(Officers)

The officers of this Association shall consist of a President, four Vice-Presidents, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Treasurer, and Librarian, all of whom shall be elected annually by ballot.

A standing Committee, consisting of two members from each evangelical church in the city, shall also be chosen at the annual meeting, ~~who shall appoint twelve from their town number to constitute, with the officers elect, a Board of Managers.~~

##### By-Laws, Article IV (Committees)

The Board of Managers shall appoint annually from its own number four committees consisting of five persons, one of whom shall be a vice-president of the Association. (The names of the committees were: Committee on Library and Rooms, Committee on Lectures, Committee on Publications, and Committee on Finance.)

Small as well as large communities were represented in the rapid growth of organizations. The 1859 Convention recommended

and hailed with universal joy the formation of Associations in every city, town, village, and neighborhood in America and throughout the world (1859, p. 117).

Typically, these Associations were composed of members from many Protestant communions, though there appeared some tendency to organize them within single denominations. The youth of the members of these Associations was always one of their distinctive characteristics. In the 1865 Convention (1865, p. 54), data from the U. S. Census of 1860 were quoted showing that young men from fifteen to forty constituted 42 per cent of the entire male population of the country, and that in a special study of 13 city and county areas where there

were new Y.M.C.A.'s), the young men of these ages ranged from 40 to 52 per cent of the total population. This age range seems to represent the scope and field of effort implied by the young Movement's conception of work among young men.

At the seventh Annual Convention at New Orleans, in 1860, the 128 delegates from 40 Associations participated in a parade described by the *New Orleans Daily Crescent* as

a long line of fine looking men, mostly young, who evidently felt they had not come to New Orleans for nothing. . . . This body attracted much attention throughout the whole long march (1860, p. 14).

It was by no means a simple question as to whether the Associations should confine their work to young men. There were those, of course, who believed that it was desirable to undertake in addition, a wider work of Christian education and general evangelism for all groups. The conflict between these two aims was not finally to be settled until long afterward if it can be said ever to have been settled. In the meantime, various compromises between the alternatives were suggested in such actions as the following:

That this Confederation, in Convention assembled, express their increased interest in the Sunday School cause, and recommend to the local Associations the establishment of Mission schools and Bible classes where it is practicable to form them, believing that this field is one peculiarly adapted to the labors of young men, promoting as it does the formation and development of Christian character and Christian unity (1856, p. 65).

The argument for concentrating upon a definite work for young men by young men had been clearly stated and accepted in 1855:

There is room for you. Your society enters upon a field hitherto unoccupied. No other associations embrace your object in their plans. No others incidentally accomplish the work which you have undertaken. No other could enter the work which you propose, without a departure from the objects of their organization. The field is all your own. It is a striking circumstance that while societies have been formed for the benefit of various classes who are exposed to great moral perils, none but yours have hitherto been organized for the moral and religious improvement of young men. It is to the honor of young men that they have taken their own case in hand (1855, p. 31).

In 1858, the Charleston Convention took formal action "that, in the opinion of this Convention, the formation and development of Christian character and activity in young men is the true sphere of the Young Men's Christian Association" (1858, p. 44). Yet the debate continued, and a year later the Convention took action "that while we

should work especially in behalf of young men, for the sake of our Associations, as well as for the sake of our Master's cause, we should be ready to enter upon any work which He shall open before us" (1858, p. 99).

Boys' work, as later developed, was as yet unknown; but special boys' meetings were referred to as early as 1858 (1858, p. 26). Yet the desire to center on young men was sufficiently strong to block recognition of the growing boy, who himself would so soon be leaving home for the cities and perhaps be in need of friendly ministry. Astonishing appears a formal Convention action in 1865 as follows:

**RESOLVED**, that the Young Men's Christian Association should not engage in outside enterprises, such as boys' meetings and mission schools, but should devote their time and means to the benefit of the young men, socially as well as religiously (1865, p. 75).

The question arose as to the place of women in the new Movement. Charleston, South Carolina, had reported a "Ladies" Auxiliary Christian Association in 1858. A delegate at the Troy Convention in 1859 advocated bringing women into meetings of the Association. By 1865, the Executive Committee of the reorganized national work itself offered the following question among several for discussion: "Why may not ladies be admitted as co-operators in the labors of an Association?" (1865, p. 24) Although young men always remained the chief object of effort and composed the primary body of the organization, this policy was not clarified for many years.

The definitely Protestant character of the new Movement was early apparent. The appeal was almost exclusively to those already members of such churches, or regarded as eligible for such membership. The Boston constitution had openly stressed the need of association for the promotion of "evangelical religion," and its framers had consulted intimately with prominent leaders of four Protestant denominations in the framing of this document (87, p. 116). The founding resolution in New York City had also stressed the desirability of an association "consisting of members of evangelical churches" and of inviting "the co-operation of Christian young men" for the accomplishment of its purposes (152, p. 29). The acceptance of "associate" members was, at the beginning, and long continued to be, justified primarily on the ground of contact and fellowship intended to lead into personal church membership in some Protestant evangelical church. This result was frequently dwelt upon as evidence of the effectiveness of their labors (p. 265).

There was no division among the Associations about the desirability of this definition of membership as within the Protestant affiliation; but there was difference of view in regard to the measures of control necessary to secure this result permanently. The issue turned on voting power, since all were agreed that right to hold office should remain

in the hands of recognized Protestant church affiliates. Many Associations believed that all accepted into associate membership might safely be allowed to share the voting power.

Clear solution of this difference was delayed for many years. The independence of each Association and its right to solve such questions for itself were respected. The first Convention in 1854 was without authority to require unity of policy. What it did, instead, was really to accredit wide local divergence, awaiting the verdict of experience to confirm or modify. The action then taken assumed pivotal significance:

RESOLVED, that while we agree in the importance of an evangelical basis for the operation of our Associations, and while we look to members of these churches for our leading and governing influence, and in order to preserve the Christian element, we recommend that only such should hold office, or vote on alterations of the constitution; this convention is decidedly of the opinion that the qualifications for the different kinds of membership can best be determined by each Association for itself, as being the best judges of the circumstances of the case, and that uniformity of action cannot, without greater experience, be asked or expected of our Associations by this Convention (1854, p. 36).

Thus, a variety of membership practices and modes of control were accredited from almost the very beginning of the history of the Movement. In 1854, the New Orleans delegates reported active, associate, life, and honorary members; delegates from Louisville and Lexington, Kentucky, reported voting by all types of members. It was hinted a year later (1855), that those members able to give more generously should do so, and in 1858 the Philadelphia Association referred to "sustaining" members (p. 232).

## 2. *Typical Programs and Significant Variants*

In response to a request made by the 1858 Convention, the Central Committee set up by the first Convention in 1854 summarized, from its vantage point, those activities that had been developed experimentally by the Associations in a "Circular of Suggestions on the Organization of New Associations" (1859, p. 156). Two classes of enterprises were carefully described therein:

(a) Those which tend directly to the spiritual benefit of the member:

Bible classes for young men  
Mission Sunday Schools  
Devotional meetings

(b) Those which tend to the same end incidentally (designed chiefly for social and intellectual improvement but calculated also to extend the moral influence of Associations):

Also Boys' meetings (for instruction and reclamation of idle and neglected youth)

Bible and Tract distribution

Relief of the Poor

Visitations of Prisons, hospitals

Maintenance of Religious services in destitute localities

Libraries and reading rooms

Lectures and sermons

Publication of statistics (relating to Sunday Schools, churches, conditions of the poor, and other matters of local interest)

Literary or intellectual classes

Employment and boarding house lists

### Finances

Maintenance of the Confederation

This contemporary summary may be accepted as a reliable resumé of what was believed to be the central or characteristic and feasible work of these new agencies of young men. It will accordingly serve as a background for examining the characteristic variations which emerged (p. 237).

*Physical Emphasis.* It was a delegate from the Brooklyn Association who, in the Convention of 1856, first voiced the argument for a vigorous program of bodily health building as an essential part of the work of attaining "vital and practical godliness"; and offered a significantly worded committee resolution endorsing the provision of "self-supporting" gymnasiums and baths.

This resolution was laid on the table, and there followed immediately another sharply contrasting report, which was adopted, dealing with "The Best Means of Attracting Worldly Young Men," as follows:

That among the most important of these means are rooms, central in their location and cheerfully and tastefully furnished; libraries, composed of the choicest religious, literary, and scientific works, papers, and periodicals, religious and secular, of the highest order; regular meetings for debates and essays; social meetings of an informal character; lectures combining in a high degree the Christian and scholarly elements; and Bible classes familiarly and ably conducted (1856, p. 67).

Four years later however, in 1860, affirmative Convention action was taken on the gymnasium suggestion:

In view of the importance and necessity of a place of rational and innocent amusement and recreation for young men, especially in large cities and towns, be it

**RESOLVED,** that the establishment of gymnasiums is both desirable and expedient, provided that they be, in all cases, under the exclusive control of such Associations as may choose to adopt this feature as a safeguard against the allurements of objectionable

places of resort; which have proven the ruin of thousands of the youth of our country:

RESOLVED, that it be recommended to the Associations to make their rooms as pleasant and attractive as possible and to this end, that they be recommended, wherever it is practicable, to procure such scientific apparatus as will tend to instruct, amuse, and improve young men who may visit the rooms (1860, pp. 31, 47).

It was still many years, however, before the first gymnasiums actually appeared, marking one of the most influential variants in the entire eighty-eight years of Y.M.C.A. history in this country.

*Religious Emphasis.* It is already quite apparent that this emphasis was evident in whatever was done; and that it contributed the principal criterion in admitting new methodologies to acceptance. Early leaders were convinced of the need of maintaining certain typical activities, such as prayer meetings and Bible classes, to this end, though not always agreed to their efficiency. For example the Central Committee, in summarizing the work of the year at the Convention meeting in 1857 (1857, p. 39), though reporting on membership in fifty-six Associations stated that, although about three-fourths were holding prayer meetings, only eight had Bible classes in successful operation, and only six had entered upon the much-argued work of establishing mission Sunday schools. (These six Associations had twenty such schools, chiefly for destitute areas of cities and maintained as a service outreach by the young men themselves.)

The Committee also commented upon a "great diversity" of the regular meetings, both as to frequency and as to program. It said, "the regular meetings are not usually attended by a large proportion of the members, especially in those Associations which have boards of managers, and large standing committees. It has been observed that most societies that have disbanded allege, as the chief cause of their failure, the neglect of members to attend them. . . . Most Associations have other meetings of various kinds, literary, musical, etc. . . ." Of the prayer meetings, the Committee stated that "these meetings are not usually well attended; but the results have been encouraging and beneficial."

Although this summary was given on the eve of what has been considered as a marked religious awakening, following the financial panic of 1857, it would appear that, unless the prayer meeting be excepted, these young Associations had not as yet discovered an effective mode of contact with those whom they hoped to reach, nor even, perhaps, the basis upon which their own continuity as local organizations was to be assured. During the revival year, when men flocked to churches and theaters by the thousands for participation in noon-day prayer services, it may have seemed that the problem of contact had been solved successfully. But soon the need for something more

tangible and direct, such as the physical services, strongly reasserted itself (p. 237).

*Social Emphasis.* The special needs of the young strangers coming to cities were always vivid to the early Associations, and this concern has also had large influence. In the constitution of the first New York City Association, adopted in 1852, the special obligation was recognized to "seek out young men taking up their residence in New York and its vicinity, and endeavor to bring them under moral and religious influences, by aiding them in the selection of suitable boarding places and employment, by introducing them to the members and privileges of this Association, securing their attendance at some place of worship on the Sabbath, and by every means in their power surrounding them with Christian associates."

The distinction between the needs of both resident and new-coming young men in organizational approach and civic responsibility may have had considerable influence in preventing the Associations from assuming a more vigorous rôle in the total community situation.

It is true that some strong efforts were made in 1866 and later by the New York City Association to act boldly as a civic force (152, p. 107) through securing legislation regarding obscene literature. An impressive survey by the Association of social conditions confronting young men in that city greatly aroused religious and civic leaders, and was instrumental in the development of the first modern Association building (152, p. 76).

Meantime, at New Orleans, the local Association had been very ready to respond with a service to yellow-fever victims, a service which had commended the Association to this community (1854, p. 15). Many Associations were active in local relief enterprises. Some of them, for example, at Washington, D. C., became a distributing agency for a part of the public funds of the city to all classes of the destitute, "without distinction of color" (1865, p. 126).

However, the experience of Associations in dealing with wider social issues led them increasingly to choose or accept a more passive rôle. Although the Associations were necessarily committed to activity in the social field, and in contact with emerging social issues of fundamental importance, early controversy in the New York Association and the vigorous discussion of slavery discussions in other Associations tended to set down firmly what came quite generally to be regarded as a cardinal doctrine of Y.M.C.A. policy: namely, that of non-partisanship or the avoidance of discussion in controversial fields. These early choices seemed later to have been given institutional character.

*Educational Emphasis.* Libraries and lectures found an early place in the programs of even the smallest Associations. The library and reading room were relied upon as a principal means of interesting not

only those who were already affiliated with church life, but also those avowing no Christian belief.

Although apparently seeking to maintain a broad and tolerant approach to the problem of intellectual growth, there is also evidence that the early Y.M.C.A. leaders were hostile to anything which might endanger evangelical belief (p. 265). In sponsoring the use of libraries in the first Convention in 1854, the delegates were careful to stipulate a limitation:

The Convention "recommends to all Associations to admit into their libraries no work which is unfriendly to evangelical Christian Faith" (1854, p. 38).

This action was followed a year later by a broader recommendation:

RESOLVED, that this Convention recommends to the Associations connected with the Confederation, as far as practicable, to institute and sustain a system of lectures upon science, history, art, and other subjects, adapted to cultivate taste and enrich the mind, which shall at the same time develop a sound morality and Christian theology; and they recommend that the system embrace courses interspersed with single lectures.

RESOLVED, that it be the duty of the Central Committee, as early as June, if possible, each year, to ascertain the names of persons who will give courses, or single lectures, their terms and subjects; and report the same to the different Associations; and the said committee shall then act as the agent to secure such lectures to any Associations requesting the same (1855, p. 79).

The 1855 Convention recommended "paying lectures as a means of revenue" having in mind touring lecturers sent out by the Convention authorities (1855, p. 60). A year later an attempt was again made to restrict sharply the type of lecturers thus to be sponsored. However, this action was finally tabled, and a substitute approved which dealt only with procedures for publicizing, routing, etc. Although such plans appeared promising, and some such tours were made, the plan for central booking was soon abandoned. The Central Committee, being without paid executive help, found it difficult to operate such programs successfully.

More promising were what were called "literary or intellectual classes for the improvement of members in composition, declamation, and debate," as a means "of interesting and attracting young men of literary taste." There were also "of this kind of enterprises, night schools for the benefit of those deprived of ordinary facilities for acquiring knowledge." The appreciation of a close relation between such special educational activity and advancement in occupational status, later to become a major emphasis, was at that time sensed dimly if at all.

*Economic Emphasis.* Though here and there an unusual young man, like John Wanamaker (153), was to appear in the local groups and later in the national meetings, and to attain great prominence in the business world, the larger proportion of the local members were certainly of average ability only. Their chief capital was in whatever of genuine character they brought into the fellowship or caught from it. From the first Convention in 1854, there was an attempt to establish a broad and inclusive basis for the Movement. The action then proposed

That the various Associations recognize the Christian sentiment that in Jesus Christ there is neither bond nor free, and therefore cordially invite all Christian young men, of whatever degree or condition in life, to an equal participation in the advantages these Associations are calculated to afford (1854, p. 12).

The London Y.M.C.A. had in fact begun as a workers' movement. George Williams, its founder, and his associates were fellow-workers in the same draper's establishment who, according to the custom of the times, also resided on the upper floors of the building in which they worked. Under modern conditions, their natural request for "the permanent and undisturbed use of a room" adequate for the growing religious meetings of this employee group might have been regarded with suspicion or even hostility. Instead, the good will and co-operation manifested were influential in accrediting the young workers' organization to other London employers. Had the locus of work relationships and conditions remained as central in Y.M.C.A. concern as they were at the beginning in London, one can hardly contemplate the influence that might have been set in motion (p. 267).

Economic problems, among others, were stressed in an invitation from the German Associations of the Westphalian Alliance, in 1865, to the American Associations to join in a forthcoming conference. Among the subjects to be discussed were:

What has called these Associations into existence, and what results  
have been achieved?

The relation of employer to employee in the light of the Gospel.  
The hidden communion of the heart with God, and the Christian  
social life in its mutual relations (1865, p. 22).

Unfortunately, a delegated representative of the United States Associations was prevented by illness from attending. The topic of employer-employee relationships recurred for some time in American gatherings.

The Associations were also not unmindful of the problem of poverty, and felt a sense of responsibility. Their proposed solution, offered in a formal Convention action in 1865, reveals much concerning their social-economic outlook:

WHEREAS, in view of the urgent necessity of reaching young men and others of the poorer class, and bringing around them the restraints of Christian influences; and whereas, tenement-house and cottage prayer meetings, by which the Gospel is carried to them in their own homes, is the most effective means of accomplishing this purpose; therefore

RESOLVED, that this Convention recommend to the special attention of its members the above subjects (1865, p. 76).

### *3. Moving from Rooms into Buildings*

The "rooms" that were opened practically everywhere at the time of the establishment of a new Association, gave concreteness to the new fellowship.

In the five-room suite of the Boston Association in 1865, a daily attendance of not less than eight hundred persons was reported. The young men evidently appreciated the opportunity to meet their friends in clean and attractive surroundings, in contrast to wide-open but vicious doorways everywhere about them.

At Elmira, for example, the Association reported:

Four rooms in the finest block in the city, in the center of business. One room is used as a library and reading room, free to all, kept open. Another room is fitted up in good style with carpet, decorated walls, and suitable parlor furniture, and intended for the prayer and various committee meetings of the Association. The other two rooms, connected by folding doors, are also carpeted and well fitted up, and designed for larger gatherings. It is intended to make these rooms a center where all religious or benevolent societies can come and, free of charge, hold their meetings (1865, p. 104).

In providing such rooms for social and meeting purposes, Associations tended closely to follow the pattern of the London Association, full descriptions of whose rooms were written to America by visitors during the early years after its founding. These London rooms were well appointed, and among other conveniences and services included even by that time spas or restaurants (87, p. 111).

The moderately large hall for meetings was prominent in the early suites of the American Associations, and some of the more enterprising Associations sought new structures with such facilities occupying the predominant space. The first separate Association building, erected at Baltimore in 1859, was of this type. Its representative described it as follows:

We have a fine building, two stories high. The building is 35 feet front by 70 feet deep; we have a large hall in the second story which we use for prayer meetings and lectures; on the first floor

we have two fine rooms, one a library, the other for the business of the Association. The hall was built in the early part of 1859 at a cost of \$7,000, of which there was still a remaining debt of \$1,300 due one of the trustees, who kindly advanced the money (1865, p. 95).

An action of the 1860 Convention commended the Washington Association for issuing "a volume of thirty-four sermons to be sold for the purpose of raising funds to build a suitable hall in the national capital," and requested the Associations to co-operate in purchasing them.

When in 1856 the Brooklyn delegate pleaded unsuccessfully for recognition of the need of gymnasium and health service, he was speaking from his local group's concern to provide a modern type of building. Another Brooklyn delegate reported some time later on Brooklyn's building plans as follows:

The question of amusements had been considered by them. In 1857 an effort was made to provide for the erection of a building, in which should be a gymnasium, bowling alley and chess room, in addition to the library, reading rooms, etc., of the Association. Just as the subscription had been started and \$10,000 of the \$50,000 had been pledged, the hard times came on, and the scheme was temporarily abandoned. It is, however, the firm determination of our members to some day carry out the project (1861, p. 14).

Robert McBurney secured formal board action in 1865 favorable to the erection of a new type of modern building as follows:

A committee to plan for a building suitable to the wants of the Association, an estimate of its cost, and a scheme for raising the necessary funds (152, p. 71).

The type of building was conceived as one required by the social conditions confronting young men in New York. Its completion in 1868 marked a new departure not only in regard to buildings and equipment but in program as well. Everywhere arose among Associations a desire to secure a specialized building. Some years earlier a danger had been sensed of placing too great reliance upon the contribution of "rooms." "In small associations," the 1857 Convention held, "too much dependence should not be placed upon them, as an effective organization may be sustained without them" (1857, p. 26). But the building movement was as yet only in its infancy (p. 252).

#### 4. *Who Were the Leaders?*

Whence came the leadership of all the previously described activity? The accounts have implied what must now be made explicit: namely, that in the main the initiative and leadership were that of the

young members themselves. There is, however, abundant evidence that the advice of ministers of evangelical churches was sought, and glimpses are seen now and again of a tactful strategy of some minister making a first suggestion to some young man in his congregation. Moreover, not only did the early conventions hear impressive addresses from ministers by way of interpretation of the field, relationship, and possibilities of the new Movement, but pastors comprised roughly one-tenth of the attendance at all of the national meetings prior to the Civil War.

Nevertheless, examination of the verbatim accounts of deliberations makes abundantly clear that the formative minds both locally and otherwise were those of the young members themselves. The early American Y.M.C.A.'s were societies of young men, associated inter-denominationally as laymen, for purposes sufficiently close to their practical life to call forth their own creative ability and devoted interest. There were, naturally, degrees of interest. In general, those most interested, able, and devoted won and accepted leadership; and came to play formative rôles in the evolution of the Movement as a whole.

They probably did not see this course as divergent in any degree from that of their respective churches. Frequently, however, they gave voice to their desire to close the gaps in a divided Church which, they thought, rendered it less effective. They considered themselves an actual embodiment of the conception of union. Naturally, they kept contact with the clergy. Many early local boards attempted to prorate their memberships among the representatives of different denominations. In a few instances, as at Boston and Cincinnati, for example, a practical democracy of church-named delegates was sought as a desirable delegate body of control.

The early Associations believed strongly in the delegation of activity projects to committees. The Boston Association from its inception in 1852 had four such committees on library and rooms, lectures, publications, and finance. Their chairmen were vice-presidents. At Elmira, the identical group of committees was followed: but, says its 1865 report,

They also appointed a Church committee, consisting of two persons from each evangelical church represented in the Association. This committee is divided into committees on Religious Exercises, Sunday Schools, Tract distribution. At the commencement of the Civil War, an Army Committee was also added (1865, p. 104).

With the assignment of members to various committee tasks, the question arose as to the location of actual control. In this respect, the form of the local organizations varied considerably. For example, the somewhat complex arrangements set up in Boston for a Board of Managers to guide the affairs of the Association was not acceptable in Cincinnati, where all members were to participate democratically in

the decisions of the Association. The Executive Committee plan of work, through advisory and executive activity, was contrasted with the Board of Managers plan, exercising governmental power. The Convention in 1858

RESOLVED, that in larger Associations, the business affairs can better be conducted by a Board of Managers, and in smaller places by the whole Association (1858, p. 44).

But in all Associations there was much interesting work to be done by the local members. The work itself required personal activity and face-to-face contact. Yet, without specialized assignment, there was little assurance that the services would be performed. The devices for relating member contacts were thus elaborated, given prestige, made into a mode of honor. They did not often carry authority for policy. As a managerial group arose, it was given much authority over policy and operations, and often had little relation to the members themselves. Committee relationship of members became an institution, without carrying a clear responsibility with policy formation.

Something quite fundamental was here involved. How could the individual members participate responsibly in the affairs of the organization? Various views were held. Among them, those of Langdon were notable. Chauncey Langdon had been one of the active founders of the Washington Association, initiated the first Convention, guided the formation of its resulting Confederation, and shared in the first World's Alliance meeting in 1855. As a young layman at the first Convention he argued for "committing the affairs of our several Associations to a few prayerfully chosen men, men upon whose hearts and minds God has set his seal, men who not only can but will be faithful to the holy stewardship, with power to call into any special service from time to time other active members" (1854, p. 41). Langdon undoubtedly won wide recognition for his exemplification of this view at its best. Others favored a broader basis (p. 245).

Thus early in the wider Movement, as in its local units, appeared the problem of leadership process and policy control, which always have remained central in any account of organizational adjustment. Closely related was the question of economic ability, and its influence upon decisions. A few devoted men of means were among the young leaders. Among other actions dealing with the financial problems of the Associations, the 1855 Convention urged "that the more wealthy members of each Association be requested to make liberal donations to its funds" (1855, p. 60).

As yet, the profession of "secretary" had scarcely appeared. But the idea had begun to take root. Only a few months after the founding of the London Association in June, 1844, the young men of the committee in charge resolved:

To employ a missionary to act as assistant secretary, to attend all

general meetings of the Association; to assist in conducting services in houses where they want help; to establish and render as efficient as possible district associations; to form, by communicating with Christian young men in the large towns and cities of the kingdom, branch associations (it may sometimes be necessary that he should visit these towns and cities); to visit young men in illness, and make himself generally useful among the class to which efforts will be directed by pointing them "to the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world" (87, p. 44).

Soon thereafter G. H. Tarlton, a young man of twenty-five years of age, was selected. These developments were known to Americans visiting the London Association. Although no American Association followed this pattern for some years, young unpaid laymen were designated to perform many of the functions. In Boston, in 1853, a "Librarian and Assistant Secretary" was named for similar duties (87, p. 121). At the 1856 Convention, the following question was raised:

If an active member of the Association be requested to devote his whole time to its interests, and accept of a salary, ought he therefore to be made ineligible for office? Or, in plain terms, is a paid agent under all circumstances ineligible for office simply because he is paid? (1856, p. 27)

This was referred for advice to the Convention's Business Committee. They gave a negative answer, whereupon the Convention itself so ruled. The distinction between principal and agent was here confused. The typically professional character of the agent's functions in later years was not as yet foreseen, nor the nature of the lay-professional fellowship which was to emerge.

Robert McBurney became the "Librarian" of the New York Association in July, 1862, at the age of twenty-five, at a salary of five dollars a week. In addition to caring for the rooms as janitor, he was also a member of the Board, and there is record of many important motions made by him. In this last respect, possibly, he tended to blur the otherwise clear picture that all subsequent Y.M.C.A. leaders have retained of him as the one who more than any other created the generally prevailing conception of the Association Secretaryship.

The period up to the Civil War was notable then, among many other things, for its discovering, associating, training and firmly establishing the leadership of young laymen at the center of Association activity (168). In these years, the terms "layman" and "member" were synonymous; but already issues had appeared that were significantly to separate them. As "laymen" gained in experience, responsibility, recognition, prestige, their number became comparatively less and they became typically older. As "members" gained in number and variety, their prestige and participation in control became comparatively less,—while they remained predominantly young.

It may be truly said that leadership of the Associations in this first period was, furthermore, a distinctive function of *young* laymen, voluntary, based on devoted interest. It would have been difficult to anticipate a time when a numerous company of employed officers would come into being, who might perhaps dominate the counsels and determine the direction of Association development. This factor must be appraised later as a prominent one in the institutionalizing of the Young Men's Christian Association (p. 258).

### 5. *Consciousness of Community*

The early Associations were the respective products of the many communities of which they were a part. When a new local Association was being formed, it would have been a mistake to assume that it had for the individual member any corporate connotation as a national Movement. Rather, the conceptions of the Association were those of persons of this particular community, unique and individual.

There was accordingly a dominant localism. In this respect the 156 local Associations that had come into being by 1865 were each so many instances of community forces, largely but never wholly personal, which stemmed from the total life of the prevailing local culture, expressing it, modifying it, preserving it, in the very experience of becoming articulate in a novel relationship.

That this must have been so can be seen from the essential nature of the individual experience that each young man of a particular community brought as readiness or interest to the new fellowship. He brought himself as he was, resident or stranger, dependent or adequate, lonely or at home, tempted or strong. He brought himself, also, in relation to his environment, whether accepting it or dissenting from it, committed by ties of home or group already established, identifying himself, measurably, with the community.

This identification with particular communities became a potent element in the newly formed Associations themselves. These Associations, reluctant even to assemble together in state or national conventions lest something of uniqueness or adequacy be taken from them, guarded then and ever since some never clearly disclosed element of localism that, however interpreted against the moving background of institutional continuity, could be understood or explained only in terms of a deep and profound identification with the elements of each community's outlook and consciousness of itself (p. 262).

Therefore, the relations of any new community group with existing groupings must at first have been expressed in direct and local terms—of similar, dissimilar, or parallel purpose; of similar, greater, or less appropriateness or need; of similar specific or general appeal; of like, or broader, or narrower basis of personal affiliation. Before these special characters were seen in terms of their appropriateness for

wider application either to the Y.M.C.A. Movement to be, or to the Church at large, or to any existing lodge, or to American life as a whole, or to young men in general, they had already been experienced as aspects, sometimes compelling, sometimes indifferent, of the immediacy of community interactions.

In this sense, the admonitions of the "Annual Address" in 1855 as to the uniqueness of this new young men's society in a field otherwise unoccupied (p. 14) were based on observations of what was believed true in each community, by one who as a minister of the Protestant Episcopal Church doubtless saw clearly the more remote far-flung scope of the Church in its institutional character as a great association. From this general point of view, the entire subject of relations to other existing or subsequent organizations assumes fresh interest.

Although libraries and reading rooms were rapidly opened by the Young Men's Christian Associations, the representatives of these Associations were hesitant about duplicating existing facilities, stating, in 1859, that they could be of greatest service in places where institutions of this kind did not already exist (1859, p. 157). Though the conduct of lecture courses was wide-spread, and generally recommended, the Washington Association reported it would not assume to compete with the excellent lectures offered free at the Smithsonian Institution.

The mid-century cities had not yet achieved the measure of group organization that later characterized them. The young men who came into these cities in steadily increasing streams did not find many group relationships available. However, all communities had churches. The relation of the new-coming young man to church organization and responsibility formed from the beginning one of the most significant aspects of community arrangements. Could he, would he, in himself, hold his older church relationship and this newer fellowship bond to be one and the same, harmonious, or supplementary? Or would they prove competitive in regard to his time and even his devotion? Would the new young men's society work against the church and possibly introduce subversive ways of thinking, even infidelity?

Before these church relationships were understood in terms of their national aspects or even in the single community, they represented conflicts or harmonizations within each member or prospective member. Thus, a Toronto delegate in the 1854 Convention referred to the lack of "countenance and encouragement from the evangelical clergyman of his city" and, also, to the desirability and benefit to come through the Association from "the annihilation of sectarian prejudices" (1854, p. 21). Others reported that the Associations became a center for the meetings of pastors and for other church activities of interchurch character (1854, p. 123). Strong efforts were also put forth to extend the work of the International Sunday School Association. They continually sought other forms of interdenominational expression. Passionately the young leaders of Association groups

clung to their actual experience of a non-sectarian, united, religious fellowship, believing it valid for themselves and fundamentally needed in their communities. Chauncey Langdon, of Washington, D. C., voiced the deep conviction felt by many young Association leaders as to the Association's mission in respect of unity:

If the Christian young men of the community with their sectarian feelings subordinated to broad Christian sympathies, more accustomed to dwell on their unities than their differences, when their ranks have supplied the pulpits, control the religious press, and form the body of the Church, will not the Church in that community be a unity? (1856, p. 38)

The hearty, if not universal, support of leading clergy was freely given. The argument of the Rev. C. M. Butler, Rector of Christ Church, Cincinnati, at the 1855 Convention ran as follows:

Yours is the precise agency which, it is felt, is needed. Parents and pastors have found it difficult to bring and keep young men under religious influences and restraints. They have felt that some new agency was required. In vain have anxious pastors, parents, and friends established Bible classes; and devised other methods for preventing the abrupt termination of religious culture (1855, p. 38).

Another Convention speaker in 1859 declared that

Formerly the bringing together of Christians of every name, that they might be one in sympathy and labor, was regarded as a utopian scheme; but now it is fully realized in the Young Men's Christian Association (1859, p. 66).

The argument for Christian unity was not conceived carelessly. Sectarian jealousy had not favorably impressed the young men. A vision was glimpsed of something profoundly moving in a Church Universal. The vital intimate experiences of local group relations and stirring occasions, such as the union prayer meetings at noon-day during the winter of 1857-1858, developed deep conviction. In the Convention of 1860, speakers applied the relation between unity and diversity in the scientific field to relations between sects or denominations and the Church Universal (1860, p. 62). Community consciousness, at first purely local, was seen as ultimately embracing a Christian world community.

#### *6. Identification with Evangelical Protestantism*

The fact that young men belonged to different churches created one of the most difficult problems faced by these immature local Associations. Young men who were recognized members of evangelical churches were quite generally regarded as personally committed

Christians whom the Associations had no qualms about accepting into their fellowship and leadership. But the prevailing interest embraced a far wider circle of young men as potentially a part of the associated fellowship. They, too, were regarded as immediately eligible to its privileges and facilities, provided they were of good moral character. But what should their status be?

On distinguished clerical advice, the influential Boston Association had withheld from these the right to vote or hold office, wishing at all hazards to keep the control of policy in the hands of professing evangelical Christians (87, p. 116). They trusted their legal restriction for a kind of "safety" that they risked through the freedom of their social fellowship. The category of associate membership was devised as a means of contact and influence, or as a kind of vestibule experience. But the proofs that it was such were not sufficiently convincing to prevent the recurrence of this same discussion until well toward the present day.

The desired control of policy was believed by some Associations to be sufficiently safeguarded when the right to officeships was restricted to those who were members of evangelical churches. They therefore allowed the associate members to exercise voting power. Yet other Associations deemed it best to give to those non-church members virtually full privileges in management and policies (1854, p. 45).

Although the London Association had established its membership in terms of being "a member of a Christian church," it had also allowed for others who gave "sufficient evidence of being a converted character." There were no "active" and "associate" members with different rôles in the fellowship. When the World's Alliance was formed in 1855, it chose to establish a purely personal affirmation as its fundamental conception of affiliation, as follows:

The Young Men's Christian Associations seek to unite those young men who, regarding Jesus Christ as their God and Savior according to the Holy Scriptures, desire to be His disciples in their doctrine and in their life, and to associate their efforts for the extension of His Kingdom among young men (119).

There was confusion concerning these matters among the Associations. In 1854, when the Confederation was organized, control of the choice of officers was stressed, with local autonomy as to membership. But a year later, it was voted

That for the purpose of giving the term "active membership" a distinctive significance, we recommend to the several Associations, to classify as active members none but those who are in communion with evangelical Churches (1855, p. 57).

Up to the Civil War, perhaps half of the local Associations

limited office holding and voting on constitutional changes to active members in good standing in Protestant evangelical churches; and many limited all voting to these. The Confederation urged this, but deferred to local conditions, attitudes, and decisions. As time passed, the doctrine of dual membership (active and associate) became one of the most significant forms of institutional influence (p. 232).

The failure to find a clear solution in these early years was probably inevitable, because the problem of local member affiliation in the new union of Christian youth was needlessly confused with the existence of formal church status (a conflict of a new with a much older institutionalism).

In setting up a basis of affiliation defined by church relationship, the American Associations were reflecting a condition in their own social environments. There was to be found not only a strongly Protestant interest, but a ready reaction to an assumed threat from unitarian or rationalist tendencies, and in addition from "Romanism."

Although these aspects were first felt and reacted to in local terms, as immediate choices, they rapidly assumed general institutional character and were reacted to as such (p. 265).

Apparently the young laymen often got beyond their depth in such questions, and turned their attention to the more tangible aspects of them, such as arrangements for proportioning their boards according to denominational representation in the membership. These Associations gradually formulated a policy, however, regarding this wider problem of institutional relationships, as they saw it in terms of their own community experience. They voted, in 1856, as follows:

RESOLVED by the Young Men's Christian Associations in Convention assembled that we do not intend that this institution shall take the highest place in our affections, or the largest share of our labors, but that we hold this organization as auxiliary to the divinely appointed means of grace, the *Church* and the preaching of the gospel (1856, p. 68).

## II. THE ACHIEVEMENT OF NATIONAL ORGANIZATION

The idea of some kind of national federation appeared early among the scattered local Associations. It was not readily welcomed by some of them despite a considerable amount of inter-association activity, which gave a certain relationship and unity to the new Movement (p. 249).

### 1. *The Confederation*

Only three years after the founding of the first Associations at

Boston and Montreal, and following much persuasion and correspondence by Langdon of Washington, the first Convention was convened at Buffalo. The New York Association had been asked by Langdon to take leadership in bringing such a gathering together but had refused. The actual call was finally issued jointly by the Buffalo and Washington Associations. In itself it reveals a considerable degree of sense of united interest, and forecast certain patterns of relationship that influenced developments for many years to come (1854, inserted section).

## CALL

February 28, 1854

Dear Brother in Christ:

There are now in the United States twenty-six Young Men's Christian Associations. Each of these several societies is organized on the principle that "union is strength"; its members are banded together that the strong in faith may aid the weak; that the earnest and reliant may encourage the faint-hearted and wavering that they who rest calmly in the possession of a Savior's love may, in God's name, run to meet those who are "yet a great way off." Why, then, should not the same motive also call us to unite our several associations in one co-operating Institution?

It is known to you that eighty-four societies in Germany have formed the "Young Men's Alliance of the Rhine and Westphalia"; that twenty-one Societies constitute the "Swiss Union"; that from thirty to forty societies in the British Empire are branches of that in London. An endeavor is now being made to establish a "Christian Union of Young Men" in France, as "sections" of which ten from the thirty-six French Associations have already enrolled themselves.

It is now proposed to call, at an early date, a convention of delegates, to congregate relative to the formation of an American Young Men's Christian Alliance, a union of independent, equal but co-operating Associations—and to secure such uniformity of thought and action as may be thought desirable.

In order therefore to gather the wishes of all American Associations on this point we are directed by our respective Boards to address the present circular to the several Corresponding Secretaries, requesting that the duplicate may be returned, with the blanks filled, at as early a date as possible. It is understood that the further action of these Associations will be governed by the desires of a majority of the societies and will be communicated as soon as the wishes of such a majority can be ascertained which it is hoped will not be later than the 15th prox.

1. Does the ..... Y. M. Christian Association think favorably of the proposition to hold a Convention of the American Associations?
2. Will your Association send delegates to such a Convention, should it be resolved upon?
3. What number of delegates from each Association is thought best?
4. In what city is it thought best to hold the Convention?
5. If Buffalo be selected, can you send delegates there? If Washington?  
(One or two localities, even more central, are omitted in deference to the wishes of resident Associations.)
6. What time is thought best? Is the latter part of May next considered suitable? Should either Buffalo or Washington be selected, a cordial invitation is extended to the delegates to be guests of their brethren of the resident Association. It is proper to remark that in the event of the meeting of a Convention, delegates *may* be welcomed from some foreign Associations.

Affectionately and fraternally yours in Christ,

(Signed) OSCAR COBB

WILLIAM CHAUNCEY LANGDON

*Corresponding Secretaries*

Of special interest in this impressive appeal, were the argument that the broader basis of associative effort was in fact an extension of now accepted local experience, the use of the word "Institution" to describe the national organization sought, the citation of similar experience abroad, and the use of the referendum questionnaire. Furthermore, the official sponsorship of the two lay boards supported the appeal of the two corresponding secretaries.

The responding Associations, nineteen in all, and coming from a wide area, brought differing conceptions of both the desirability and feasibility of such a union. Several Associations agreed with the St. Louis Board, which sent a formal communication that it "would not be desirable nor expedient to confer upon such Alliance any authority over the separate Associations, nor any right of control or interference with their internal affairs of management." However, it favored the suggestion of an American Alliance "for the purpose of mutual information, counsel, and advantage in the prosecution of their common aims" (1854, p. 11).

The opposition of the New York Associations, which had been requested in 1852 by Langdon to take the lead in the matter, was notable. No delegates were sent to the first Convention in 1854. The designated Central Committee was accepted later on only to clear correspondence. New York also refused to entertain the second Convention, which it had been strongly urged to do, holding that the Convention would detract from local interests and foster a centralizing spirit at war with independent action. Fear of disagreements on the question of slavery was also a factor. This later became an acute issue in the New York Association itself (87, p. 131). Other strong Associations withheld co-operation at first. Progress was difficult.

Upon assembling at the first Convention, the thirty-seven delegates found much difficulty in reaching a basis of understanding as to any form of continuing relationship beyond the annual meeting. At first they rejected the union altogether, but later reconsidered. Langdon of Washington found it necessary to reply vigorously to objections, advanced particularly with regard to a mistaken view

That it was proposed either to erect one society into a parent body, of which others should be considered branches, or to constitute a central or federal organization, having *authority* at least to some extent over the several Associations, in connection with an annual legislative convention. These, and all similar constructions of the propositions . . . which admit of any interference, beyond a recommendation, in the local and internal affairs of *any* Association, were most earnestly and entirely repudiated (1854, p. 27).

Finally, the Associations were ready to agree on the following Articles of Confederation:

## ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION

1. RESOLVED that this Convention recommend to the Young Men's Christian Associations of the United States and British Provinces the formation of a Voluntary Confederation for their mutual encouragement, co-operation, and usefulness; and they recommend, when twenty-two shall concur in the plan hereinafter suggested, the said Confederation shall go into operation.
2. RESOLVED that a Convention of the Young Men's Christian Associations of the United States and British Provinces be held annually at such time and place as may be determined.
3. RESOLVED that while it would oftentimes be judicious to discuss in Convention principles of organization and action, this body shall have no authority or control in the affairs of an Association.
4. RESOLVED that a Central Committee be appointed, to consist of eleven members, five of whom shall be residents of the city where the Committee shall for the time being be located, and shall be members of different religious denominations; the remaining six to be selected from the Associations generally, not more than one member from any one Association.
5. RESOLVED that the Central Committee shall maintain correspondence with American and kindred foreign bodies, promote the formation of new Associations, collect and diffuse appropriate information, and from time to time recommend to the local Associations such measures as may seem calculated to promote the general object; but it shall not have authority to commit any local Association to any proposed plan of action until approved by said Association, nor to assess any pecuniary rate upon them without their consent.
6. RESOLVED, that the Central Committee be appointed by this Convention, and continue in office until their successors are appointed by a subsequent Convention.
7. RESOLVED that the Central Committee shall ascertain the wishes of the different Associations in regard to the time and place of holding each annual Convention, and shall issue the call as nearly as possible in accordance therewith. (1854, p. 36)

'Thus was begun an association that was to continue until the Civil War broke, and which year by year gained in membership, cohesion, and representative quality (91). The annual gatherings, the interim activities of the Central Committee, and the march of social events all lent support to the idea of mutual association so long as it did not invade the area of local responsibility.

In assigning to local autonomy such a determining and inviolate relationship in the policy of the Movement, the Associations established immediate institutional arrangement as a limitation upon another remote institutional contingency. They institutionalized localism in their attempt to avoid giving institutional character to a device for central control. In the end they got something of both, since in each case something impersonal and political intervened to circumscribe or divert direct personal responsibility in Movement-wide affairs (p. 249).

## 2. *The Central Committee at Work*

The Articles of Confederation were ratified by the twenty-two

Associations required and three in addition. By February following the first meeting, the Central Committee undertook its assigned tasks, including correspondence with Associations, locating and planning the next Convention, etc. The Central Committee, in dealing with still other Associations, was confronted with many problems. In an early circular, the Committee stated its understanding of its functions to be:

1. The maintenance of correspondence with American and foreign kindred bodies, upon such system as the Committee shall think best.
2. Not only the collection, but the diffusion, by some suitable means, of information obtained by this correspondence or otherwise.
3. The recommendation of such measures, apparently calculated to advance the common object of the Associations, as an acquaintance with the theory and practices of the institution, in its widely scattered and various fields, would naturally suggest.
4. The promotion of the formation of new Associations.
5. The execution and superintendence in the name of any number of Associations desiring and authorizing it, of any proposed plan of co-action.
6. The reception and expenditure, upon the foregoing objects, of such sums as the Associations of the Confederation shall voluntarily contribute therefor (1854, p. 104).

The Central Committee early began the development of a manual for the organizations, on the advice of succeeding Conventions, and in 1858 published a model constitution. In 1859 the Committee reported the circulation of 2,000 and 2,500 copies of the manual in the two previous years. Slavish uniformity was not sought. The "propriety of adaptation rather than imitation" was pointed out.

A more regular and formal mode of recognizing new Associations was urged by the Central Committee in 1857, and two years later the Committee itself assumed responsibility for devising a set of by-laws providing among other things for the following plan of admitting Associations to the Confederation:

Any Young Men's Christian Association that seeks to unite therein young men who, regarding Jesus Christ as their God and Savior, according to the Holy Scriptures, desire to be his disciples in their doctrine and in their life, and to associate their efforts for the extension of his Kingdom among young men, having ratified, or approved by resolution, the Articles of Confederation, and whose constitution, by-laws, and application for admission to the Confederacy, have been received by the Committee, may be admitted to membership in the Confederation by a majority of the local members and the district member in whose district such society is

situated,<sup>2</sup> except that whenever an application shall present any unusual question, or the propriety of granting it should be doubtful, then a majority of the whole Committee shall be requisite to admit such Association (1859, p. 161).

The reference to decision in the various regions or districts that had been recognized signified an important step in decentralization of function, and was the precursor of a complex plan of field organization in which relationships of local, state, district or regional, and national services occupied much attention for more than three-quarters of a century (p. 249).

In 1857, the Central Committee sent a circular letter to Associations, stressing the two principles of Christian union and individual responsibility and including "Suggestions on the Organization of New Associations." Once again the object of the organization was stated as the formation and development in young men of Christian character and Christian activity. Three particulars were enunciated:

1. The mutual improvement of its own members, their growth in grace and knowledge, and the cultivation of social intercourse among Christians of different denominations;
2. The endeavor to exert a wholesome influence over the young men around it, striving, in various ways, to draw them from temptation and sin, and to lead them to virtue and to God;
3. The promotion and support of benevolent and Christian enterprises calculated to advance the spiritual and temporal welfare of their fellow-men. It is not intended to interfere with the institutions of the Church, but to sustain them, and to bring into her service a large amount of vigor and energy now suffered to waste (1858, p. 57).

These various measures did not meet with complete understanding nor success. In 1859, only 50 Associations out of 123 known to exist were Confederation members. The record of the value of the Confederation was, however, impressive as a factor in the survival of affiliated as against non-affiliated Associations. Three times as many Non-Confederating Associations, organized prior to July, 1856, had disbanded by 1859 as had Confederating Associations (1859, p. 145). When the revised Articles of Confederation adopted by the 1859 Convention were submitted to the Associations for ratification later, only 32 of the 72 counted eligible to ratify reported. All of these were favorable, the remainder failing to take action. During that year, however, eleven new Associations joined the Confederation.

The conclusion from these briefly summarized episodes is that the Confederation and its interim Central Committee represented far from a unanimous desire among the Associations. However, there lay

<sup>2</sup> Refers to field districts which had been approved, and the endorsement by the local Associations of these districts of any new application.

behind it an urge and sentiment that were consistent with other integrative forces of the time. Reluctance, or resistance, to some form of continuous or periodic interrelationship between the Associations would seem inconsistent with the wide-spread interest and sense of common need that created these Associations. Such hesitation or opposition would seem to have been caused chiefly by a false estimate of local adequacy, and by failure to grasp the general character of the new problems confronting young men.

Desire to maintain local control has always been a natural attitude under American democracy, whether in political, educational, or social

TABLE I  
PARTICIPATION IN EARLY CONVENTIONS\*

	ASSOCIATIONS	DELEGATES		
1854—Buffalo.....	16	28		
1855—Cincinnati....	22	52		
	CONFEDERATED ASSOCIATIONS		OTHER ASSOCIATIONS	
	ASSOCIATIONS	DELEGATES	ASSOCIATIONS	DELEGATES
1856—Montreal.....	23	75	3	12
1857—Richmond.....	14	44	3	7
1858—Charleston.....	20	92	4	5
1859—Troy.....	49	213	24	74
1860—New Orleans...	31	112	9	16

\*1873, p. 9.

fields, though measurably surrendered in economic life. Few forms of social organization, however, have dared to counter this fundamental point of view, nor would democratic organizations be likely to wish to do so. The problem lay with the Associations of this early period, in how to reconcile the principle of local adequacy with the growing desire for sharing, co-operating, and (to some extent) co-acting on a broader than local basis.

The consciousness of union that grew steadily among the Associations was much affected by the annual Conventions, which were so located year by year as to be within reach of increasing numbers of Associations.

### 3. *Recommendatory and Direct Actions of the Confederation and Central Committee*

The convention dealt with deliberation on the purposes and directions of the Movement; and, through the device of "recommendations to the Associations," sought carefully to avoid any attempt to legislate for the Associations themselves. But it also expressed its view on various other matters without such reference. In time, the Conventions gave expression, at least measurably, to the collective conviction of the Associations as to field, function, and relationships.

These recommended actions dealt largely with methods of organization and program, and were doubtless all vital to the life and growth of the local Associations. Yet they formed but a part of the picture. During these same years the annual Conventions took still other actions, not as recommendations to the Associations, but *in their own collective capacity* as representing the whole body of Associations. As the Confederation grew in strength and prestige, it increasingly gave expression to its own thought, through the assembled delegate representatives, upon almost every subject related to its purposes, policies, and relationships.

Undoubtedly, during these years, the attempt to distinguish clearly between matters of recommendation only and matters of direct expression was not wholly successful. When local representatives met face to face around the complex problems of young men in the rapidly changing culture, they retained the same sense of immediacy that they felt in their local meetings. This attitude was often stronger than the logical controls they set up to limit central authority and to guarantee local autonomy.

The nature of national organization in this first period of American Y.M.C.A. history, then, may be seen as an accelerated yet precarious development, launched and led by enthusiastic, far-seeing individuals; and strongly under-girded by the nature of the needs of the young Associations and by the interrelated character of the problems that had demanded their attention (p. 249).

The local units, behind which were the nucleus and circle of local members, made appreciable progress in devising, accrediting, supporting, and implementing their novel inter-Association extension. The experiences of travel and occupational readjustment in strange cities must have facilitated the sense of need of inter-city ties. The Confederation and its expressions through convention, Central Committee, journal, reports, correspondence, visitation, etc., existed first of all as a direct experience in the consciousness of only a relatively small number of persons; but became through them an important element in what these and other members thought and did. The potency of the wider Association was extended. It could and did operate in many areas beyond the ability of local units to act. The collective body, as a Confederation, could not commit the Associations directly; but it could and did affect both negatively and affirmatively their aims, fields, functions, and emphasis.

This gradual development of a sense of unity and common stake, symbolic of underlying unities and conflicts in the culture, was interrupted by the deep disruption of the Civil War. It broke up the Confederation and much of its structure of unity. At the same time, paradoxically, it awakened the Movement and confirmed the nascent spirit of union. This can be asserted, even though for many years the relations between the Associations of the North and South were estranged,

their fellowship blocked, and their communications partisan. Yet never again was the need of the national bond between local Associations questioned—only its nature and the method of its functioning.

### III. THE CIVIL WAR AND THE ASSOCIATIONS

The Philadelphia Convention in 1865 listed thirty-three Associations in nine southern states that had been in touch with the Convention up to the opening of the war. Some of these, such as New Orleans, La., Louisville and Lexington, Ky., had been represented in the original meeting in 1854 and had continued close relationships. Richmond, Charleston, and New Orleans had had the honor of entertaining the Conventions of 1857, 1858, and 1860. The Associations of the South, like those of other sections, had shared fully in the life of the Confederation up to the war.

The onset of the war in April, 1861, effectively interrupted the plans for the next annual meeting of Association leaders to have been held in St. Louis. No further general gathering was held for two years. An emergency meeting in New York in 1861 and a called "convention" in Chicago in 1863 were wholly northern in representation. Informal, though important, actions were taken in both. In the latter, the Confederation and its Central Committee were held to be dissolved.

The first Convention after the interruption of 1861 was at Boston in 1864, and was largely attended, though still lacking southern representation. (New Orleans had offered to co-operate if the meeting could be held at a more convenient date.) Only in this Boston meeting did the Convention return to something of its earlier dignity as a representative gathering. It formally established the Executive Committee as the authorized interim agency, largely along general lines already established under the old Central Committee.

Nor were southern delegates present at the 1865 Convention in Philadelphia, though leaders from practically all of the southern states did thereafter accept appointments to the Executive Committee (as Corresponding Members) during 1865 and 1866. A single New Orleans delegate was the sole representative of southern Associations in 1866 at the Albany meeting, and thus re-established direct contact after long interruption.

The issue of slavery had been a subject of grave agitation long before the outbreak of the Civil War. The social ferment, which had led long before the war to the abolitionist movements in the North and to the secessionist attitudes in the South, must have permeated many other social relationships. Other young men of the period could hardly have avoided the controversy that so deeply affected Abraham Lincoln in his youth. He was but forty-five when the first national Association meeting was held in 1854.

Fear of discussion about slavery was an influential factor in the

unwillingness of the New York Association to affiliate with the Y.M.C.A. Confederation back in 1854 (152, p. 37). This Association had sought during the previous year to exclude *Uncle Tom's Cabin* from its library because it was regarded as inflammatory. In 1856, when some of the members of this Association were active in the Fremont Campaign, the Association had been attacked as a political club. The *New York Express* was excluded from the library after an attack. An unsuccessful attempt was made to discipline the Library Committee. Resolutions denouncing slavery were blocked. Abolitionists were disgruntled and, finally, a group of 150 "leading young business men" withdrew as a protest. Those remaining presented on the same evening an even larger number of candidates for membership. Thus, in one of the strongest local Associations nearly five years before the outbreak of the Civil War, the slavery issue had led to almost complete disruption. This experience disposed that Association, and many others, to a policy of non-participation in controversial issues, which became for the Association organization as a whole a guiding principle in the entire field of public affairs (p. 267).

When the Confederation itself failed to take any strong anti-slavery action, the Montreal Association withdrew from it (in 1858), rejoining only after the outbreak of the war at the meeting of the Associations of the North and of the British provinces in 1863 in Chicago.

Despite the ferment, which must have been widespread during these years, one may note little or nothing in the verbatim record of the 1860 New Orleans Convention proceedings to suggest the attitudes underlying their apparently harmonious fellowship. But the startling events of the spring of 1861 brought Association relations themselves sharply into focus. The next Convention was due soon in St. Louis. The new President of the nation had been inaugurated on March 4. He had pledged to maintain the Union. The war opened in April. Secession of states had begun. Committees of Association leaders of the South released on May 6 from Richmond, and on May 22 from New Orleans, letters in anticipation of the approaching convention, pleading for peace and understanding for the continuance of their common fellowship; but asserting in the strongest terms their case for an independent confederate government of seceded, slave-holding states. These communications revealed deep differences—cleavages so profound as to overwhelm the newer bond of the Association relationship. Yet this bond was not wholly to disappear.

It is possible, to be sure, that the southern leaders considered that the Association Movement was in fact already international, and might embrace three nations in North America thenceforth, one of which would be the Southern Confederacy. Northern leaders, despite their international affiliations, were totally unprepared to entertain such a view.

The early months of the war, although preventing the expected

regular assembly of the Associations at St. Louis, did not stop inter-Association activity. In the North, George H. Stuart of Philadelphia, as Chairman of the (last) Central Committee of the threatened Confederation, acceded to urgent pleas that a special convention be held. The call, sent out by George Stuart and John Wanamaker, indicated that the meeting would assemble "for the purpose of systematizing and extending the Christian efforts of the various Associations among the soldiers of the army." The call read in part as follows (1866, p. 87):

In issuing this call, they, in common with Christians of every name, deeply deplore the necessity which has forced the Government to take up arms in defense of its constitutional rights and liberties; and it is their earnest prayer that by the blessing of God, on a true and righteous basis, peace may soon again be enjoyed throughout every state of the once happy and prosperous Union.

In the meantime, while such numbers of young men are congregated together, surrounded by temptation and danger, an open field of usefulness is presented, vast in extent and interesting beyond expression. To enter in and cultivate this field, there appears no instrumentality so well adapted as the organizations already formed in every city, town, and village of the country.

The work has already been successfully begun by several of these, in particular by the New York Association, whose agent has for nearly three months been actively employed among the camps in the neighborhood of Washington.

The official minutes of this emergency New York meeting were headed "Proceedings of the Special Convention of Young Men's Christian Associations of the Loyal States." At the meeting were forty-three delegates from fifteen Associations, twelve delegates being from the New York Association. Aside from recessing to hear an address before the local Association by Henry Ward Beecher, the meeting dealt solely with the business of war service, principles and policies to guide which were adopted, after discussion as follows:

A PLAN BY MEANS OF WHICH THE ASSOCIATIONS MAY WORK TOGETHER IN  
AID OF THE SOLDIERS

- (1) That it is the duty of the Associations to take active measures to promote the spiritual and temporal welfare of the soldiers in the Army and the Sailors in the Navy, in co-operation with the Chaplains.
- (2) That a Christian Commission, consisting of twelve members, who shall serve gratuitously, five of whom shall be a quorum, and who may fill their own vacancies, be appointed to take charge of the whole work; with power to appoint one or more secretaries and such other agents as they may deem expedient, prescribe their duties, and fix their compensation.

- (3) That the Commission report to the Associations and the public their doings and disbursements through such widely circulating journals as will publish them.
- (4) That we recommend that each Association appoint an Army Committee, who shall have charge of the collecting, receiving, and transmitting of contributions of all kinds for the soldiers, and be the medium of communication between their several Associations and the Commission.
- (5) That we have heard with satisfaction that our brethren in the Army have in some instances organized themselves into religious associations, and we hope the good work will go on until there is one in every regiment.
- (6) That all organizations designed to promote the spiritual and temporal welfare of the Army be cordially invited to freely make use of the facilities afforded by the Commission.
- (7) That the Associations be urgently recommended to institute immediate measures by public meetings and otherwise, to obtain the necessary means to meet the expenses incident to the work of the Christian Commission (1866, p. 90).

It was evident that this meeting, although filled with deep sorrow and anxious for reconciliation, placed blame heavily upon the absent southern group. The possibility of the Confederation continuing its fellowship among southern Associations even if they were to continue as a separate state apparently did not seriously occur to them. The following action was passed without discussion:

**RESOLVED**, that the first half hour of this afternoon's exercises be devoted to special prayer to God that He would subdue all bitterness of spirit among our brethren of the South, recall them to their allegiance, and reunite us in the bonds of Christian love (1861, p. 90).

Some anxiety was expressed lest the new services with the armed forces impair and weaken the character and service of the Associations as developed during the decade previous. The following resolution was passed unanimously:

**RESOLVED**, that the objects and influences of the several Young Men's Christian Associations will be most efficiently promoted in the sphere of duty contemplated in the plan of a "Christian Commission" as proposed by this Convention, and the co-operation and confidence of the community will be served, by a scrupulous adherence to the principles which the Associations were originally founded, both in the character of its discussions and the policy of its action (1861, p. 92).

A further action referring to possible emancipation of the slaves and seeking to commit the meeting to this position was discussed, but withdrawn (p. 267).

The work of the Christian Commission, though initiated by Association leaders, became a medium for expression of a much wider interest. It included the recruiting of chaplains among the active ministry. Army committees were widely organized in the local Associations, some of which antedated the organization of the Christian Commission. Its chairman reported in person at the Boston Convention in 1864, where formal endorsements and further sponsorship were given. He said:

During the month of May alone the receipts of the Commission, in cash, were \$346,000. The total cash receipts of the Commission from its commencement up to June 1st were over \$834,000; stores received \$920,000; value of delegates' services \$113,000; value of Bibles, Testaments and portions of Scripture presented \$71,500; railroad facilities \$72,000; telegraph facilities \$16,000; number of delegates sent out 2,100; Bibles and portions distributed 700,000; hymn and psalm books 750,000; knap-sack books 2,000,000; weekly and monthly papers 4,800,000; pages and tracts 25,000,000; magazines 200,000; library books 60,000. In the field there were 55 central stations, 150 out-stations; 11 army wagons; 52 horses; 2 schooners and a tug-boat. The total value of the Commission's receipts from all sources from the beginning of its work was \$2,250,000 (1864, p. 101).

This first contact of the Y.M.C.A. with a war emergency was the precursor of an adaptation of the Association that was to recur on at least two later occasions, and to exert an important influence upon its total development (pp. 66, 139).

The assembled Association representatives in the Convention of 1863, 1864, and 1865, discussed in great detail reports on "the State of the Country" as well as the state of the Associations. The formal enactments continued to express blame toward their southern brethren, to give thanks for victories, to hail the emancipation proclamation and, without voicing any vigorous spirit of reconciliation, to look forward to reunion and peace.

In 1865 the Convention Committee on the State of the Country was instructed to prepare an "address" to the Associations in the southern states. In the same meeting an elaborate action dealt with the war sufferings of the South, and the problems of reconstruction as the North saw them, asking all Associations to co-operate as they might. In this Convention also was expressed again the concern that had been voiced at the launching of the Christian Commission in 1861. The chairman of the Convention expressed the view that "during the war the Associations had drifted away from the object for which they were formed, and substituted the care of our soldiers and sailors for the legitimate work of the Association. This we ought to have done, and not to leave the other undone" (1865, p. 14).

A hopeful note was seen in the action authorizing a representative

about to make a tour of the southern states to reorganize and further the work there (1865, p. 82).

The bearing of Civil War events upon the early Association Movement was so fundamental as to mark the termination of its first period of development. It was a period of beginnings and discovery in which the validity of its central idea had been demonstrated, but in which the implications of its social character and purpose had still to be seen. In the period following the Civil War, these were given further concretion.

However, the Civil War emergency revealed some strange kinds of institutional behavior. The Confederation itself, with its Articles of Agreement that so carefully provided for respect and caution in relationships between general and local bodies, was actually swept aside without even an act of rescission. The emergency Convention of 1861 did its work in the main according to the established procedures, but as if some new authority or bond of reality had replaced that of the Confederation. At the later informal Convention in Chicago in 1863, the Confederation was completely forgotten, its Central Committee disregarded, the old relationships regarded as severed, and a new cause of unity recognized.

Yet from this strange wiping out of established forms of institutional action there survived an essence strikingly similar to that which had gone. The patterns appeared to have been set, and in the main the modes of local and general behavior continued to conform to them. Even the war's interruption kept eyes focused on the young man. A new Executive Committee was provided to unify and guide the life of the Movement as a whole. There was a living common interest, at least among northern Associations and those of Canada, sufficiently real, even with its keen partisanship, to become the basis of later conciliation between these and the estranged southern Associations. There was the habit and influence of the annual meetings. There was the continuing self-consciousness and sense of adequacy of the local autonomous Associations. There were the young lay members carrying in their own experiences the memories and bonds of inter-Association identity, upon which, in modified forms, yet new institutional structures would again be built and, perhaps, in their time superseded (93).

In all of these aspects, then, may be seen an emerging Association that was clearly a correlate of its times. It reflected their ideology, shared their purposes, and moved with their major trends. Yet it was able to maintain its own identity and, in some measure, to determine its own directions.

### CHAPTER III

## PERIOD OF ESTABLISHMENT

*From the Civil War to 1900*

AFTER the Civil War the nation confronted not only the problem of southern "reconstruction," but a mightier reconstruction of the national life itself, which would be certain to require at least one or two generations. Confirmed in the principle, the nation had to determine whether it could really achieve a united life and a worthy culture.

The potency of this national prospect must have conditioned all relationships. To voluntary associations, such as the Young Men's Christian Association, the situation meant a sense of new opportunity, fresh dedication to earlier purpose, and a new, though differently conceived, unity.

The long thirty-four-year span down to the end of the century constituted a fairly coherent whole. In it there was consistent elaboration of conception and activity. From this there emerged a clearly established organizational structure and a characteristic program and policy with respect to continuance and extension.

The Civil War had actually broken the relationships between Associations in North and South. It had interrupted their annual meetings and correspondence. It had engaged their young members in fratricidal strife. Yet, though the Confederation of local Associations so laboriously built up over a decade no longer existed, the war had revealed their real interdependence. The emergency had evidenced among northern Associations, through the U. S. Christian Commission, a solidarity and cohesion far stronger than the relationships of the Confederation. This emergency work had also arrested public attention. It had won wide-spread co-operation and approval, the implications of which for the Y.M.C.A. were not apparent for many decades.

The surviving Associations emerged from the war disciplined and mature. They were anxious to rebuild their national unity, to compose their purposes, and their as yet unmeasured energies, toward the accomplishment of a mission that they saw clearly. High morale characterized their great Convention in 1866. It was considered a convention of innovations, and from it many significant departures can be traced that became confirmed and established during the following decades.

Establishment, or substantial social acceptance, did not imply permanence, nor necessarily signify social validity. There was to be sure a relative permanence, along with unavoidable processes of adjustment. These constituted essential modes of adaptation as instrumental to survival. There may also have been in intrinsic, though limited, validity: that is, a quality of appropriateness or suitability at a given time or in a given circumstance. As time went on, or the circumstances recurred, an impression of validity resulted. Yet these characters were never decisively manifested or verified as an exclusive expression of the Association. Many other relationships also influenced the same persons, expressed the same aims, occupied the same social milieu. The Association's validity, like its continuance, was contingent.

In each of the aspects of establishment to be examined may be discerned adaptive aspects. As a result of these internal modifications, an essentially mature voluntary association had established itself by 1900. Dominant institutional forms had by that time arisen that largely fixed the character of the organization's responses to subsequent social opportunity.

### I. ADAPTATION TO GEOGRAPHICAL SECTIONS

It was a fact of some consequence that an association copied from England could take root and establish itself in America. That it also sprang up in widely distant cities with considerable rapidity should not be passed by lightly. In the interdependent culture of the present day, modes of living and vogues of interest readily find almost world-wide expression. It was sharply different in the more provincial culture of the last century. There must have been many promising organizations that did not spread beyond the city of their origin. In the Young Men's Christian Association, however, there were combined elements that had a direct appeal not limited by sectional interest. It was built upon unities underlying special sectional characters, and identified itself with the essential foundations of national life (p. 245).

The number of Associations increased from 90 in 1866 to 1,476 in 1900. In Table II is shown the substantial increase for each decade. There was undoubtedly some relationship between this growth in number of Associations and the population trend. Population increases of about 26 per cent were taking place during each decade, except the last, and the population center was shifting rapidly westward. In 1860, Associations were already reported from 27 states and Canadian provinces, in 1880 from 50, in 1890 from 55, and in 1900 from 56.

Southern Associations, few of which had survived the ravages of the war, soon sprang again into being after the beginnings of national reunion took place at the Convention at Albany in 1866. At no time, apparently, was a permanent separate Movement considered, as in the

case of the churches. A tour of friendship by Messrs. Hall and Lee in 1870 as a specially designated mission became a tour of organization as well. A similar later tour in 1877 occupied three months and covered 7,000 miles, by which time 162 Associations had been established in the South. Robert Weidensall, who was the first full-time paid "agent" of the International Committee (*113*),<sup>1</sup> worked along the Pacific Railroad, and made an extended effort to organize Associations in the western states.

TABLE II  
FOUR STEPS OF PROGRESS\*

	1866	1876	1886	1896	1900
Number of Associations	90	982	1,066	1,448	1,476
Total Membership.....	15,498	84,392	132,808	263,298	268,477
Active Membership.....	**	**	64,361	120,820	123,887
Members Serving on Committees.....	**	**	19,941	37,823	38,902
Secretaries and Other Employed Officers...	12	108	519	1,311	1,609
Buildings.....	None	60	90	315	391
Value of Buildings.....	"	\$2,397,000	\$3,920,810	\$16,759,800	\$21,445,415
Net Property, including Funds, etc.....	"	\$2,428,069	\$5,040,178	\$16,655,014	\$21,761,102
Volumes in Libraries...	34,577	175,288	272,024	479,563	523,215
Annual Expense (Local Work).....	\$50,000	\$312,821	\$781,054	\$2,297,441	\$2,930,899

\*An attempt was made as early as 1858 to secure facts concerning the local Association operations through direct annual inquiry. Not all Associations reported every year. On the whole, the reports were made with considerable care. They yield data believed sufficient to give a general picture of the trend for certain items (*117*, 1901, p. 10).

\*\*Information not available for this year.

The actual number of Associations organized will never be accurately known. So rapid was the early extension that small groups sprang up everywhere, stimulated by rather wide-spread press discussions of the new Movement among young men and by deliberate efforts mentioned above. There was heavy mortality among many of these small groups in smaller communities, where enthusiastic and well-meaning young men started Associations that soon died out. This was probably caused in part by members moving away, in part by lack of clear conceptions as to purpose or practical program, and doubtless in part also by absence of continuous, well-informed local leadership. Table III shows for the period 1870 to 1900 the number of Associations filing official reports and copies of their constitutions each year, and otherwise qualifying for recognition under established International Convention rulings. During several years following 1870, the number

<sup>1</sup> The name of the interim body authorized by the 1866 Convention was changed to International Committee in 1879. Incorporation followed in 1883.

of Associations *not reporting* or *not qualified* for recognition exceeded those formally recognized.

Important factors of selection were at work in the survival of Associations. In Table IV, comparisons are shown for each decade of

TABLE III  
SUMMARY OF EXISTING AND REPORTING ASSOCIATIONS FOR THE YEARS 1870—1900\*

YEAR	ASSOCIATIONS REPORTING	EXISTING—NOT REPORTING	TOTAL EXISTING
1870.....	334	429	763
1871.....	326	489	815
1872.....	298	539	837
1873.....	442	499	941
1874.....	397	447	844
1875.....	555	166	721
1876.....	821	161	982
1877.....	748	379	1,127
1878.....	(not distinguished)		1,236
1879.....	679	262	941
1880.....	849	123	972
1881.....	744	159	903
1882.....	779	102	881
1883.....	737	100	837
1884.....	834	34	868
1885.....	905	26	931
1886.....	988	78	1,066
1887.....	1,064	112	1,176
1888.....	1,102	138	1,240
1889.....	1,141	132	1,273
1890.....	1,208	133	1,341
1891.....	1,291	94	1,385
1892.....	1,373	51	1,424
1893.....	1,439	Not reported later	
1894.....	1,397		
1895.....	1,431		
1896.....	1,448		
1897.....	1,429		
1898.....	1,415		
1899.....	1,429		
1900.....	1,439		

\*All types of Association—city, railroad, student, etc.—are included in the figures in this table, including branches of city Associations recognized as units under International Convention rulings (117).

the percentage of Associations continuing for more and less than ten years from the date of organization. Allowance may be made for such factors as merging of branches within cities, merging of suburbs into cities, and grouping of smaller units into districts or the later "county" type of organization. It is suggested that survival was probably closely related to the developing organizational structure, with its distribution of supervisory leadership.

Survival was also related to the program conception that became

prevalent under the influence of larger cities and the building movement. Both of these aspects will be discussed later. These accepted emphases, it should be recognized here, greatly influenced the direction of Association development in the ensuing decades. Smaller cities found it difficult, if not quite beyond their economic resources, to keep pace with developing conceptions of a service that centered in such costly facilities. Had some equally clear plan of work in the smaller community emerged, one which did not require expensive equipment, the Association might have expanded its influence among thousands of such communities. There was readiness, without accompanying means.

TABLE IV

CITY ASSOCIATIONS CONTINUING LESS THAN TEN YEARS AND BEYOND TEN YEARS  
FROM DATE OF ORGANIZATION, FOR CERTAIN DECADES\*

DECADE BEGINNING	ASSOCIATIONS ORGANIZED**	PER CENT CONTINUING LESS THAN 10 YEARS	PER CENT CONTINUING MORE THAN 10 YEARS
1860.....	164	44.5	55.5
1870.....	405	48.4	51.6
1880.....	563	48.7	51.3
1890.....	147		

\*117.

\*\*The number of City Associations here studied does not constitute all City Associations organized during each decade, but a sampling sufficiently large for the purpose indicated made up from all Associations listed in the *Year Book* lists for the first years of these decades. For example, it does not include Associations that began after 1870, and discontinued within the single decade. This was obviously a large number.

A freer adaptation would there be necessary. This was later attempted, but never became an actuality in more than a very small percentage of such communities.

## II. ADAPTATION TO THE PREVALENT PROTESTANT EVANGELICAL DOCTRINE

Early Associations were organized under the strong influence of a typically Protestant concern for evangelization. Many Associations had provided in their constitutions that not only their officers but voting itself should be restricted to Protestant-minded and Protestant-affiliated young men. The widely circulated constitution of the Boston Association in 1851 so stipulated. This question had occupied the interest of many early conventions. Even the first, in 1854, had attempted to support the principle of Protestant leadership, but it held also for local autonomy in determining the local qualifications for membership (p. 16).

Fourteen years later, in 1868, a report of local practice regarding membership revealed marked diversity. Of 262 Associations, only 127, or 48.5 per cent, reported restricting active membership to members

of Protestant evangelical churches. "Good moral character" was a sufficient qualification for active membership in 67, or 25.6 per cent, of the Associations. The others either failed to report, used some other basis, or no basis at all.

The prevailing philosophy of Association membership up to this time had been simple: it contemplated an inner fellowship of committed Christians (according to Protestant conceptions of personal relationship and loyalty to Jesus Christ) and a constant relationship with those not so committed, who were primary objects of endeavor. It was assumed that control through officerships and the act of voting would be sufficient to protect the purposes and ensure the directions of the Associations; and also that the presence of large numbers of others would exert little direct influence upon objectives and methods of work.

But the Associations found it increasingly difficult, in face-to-face relationships, to distinguish between young men of sound character in terms of church status. Too often individuals not formally related to a church possessed undeniable evidence of good character. Some with church status did not do so. In general, however, it was ardently believed that the aim of all serious evangelistic effort was the establishment of Protestant church membership as the logical expression of "conversion," and that leadership or authority derived from those so connected would serve to guarantee religious vitality.

The discovery that many Associations were obliterating the distinction upon which this conception of organizational strength and mission rested aroused the nearly five hundred delegates (representing 84 Associations) who attended the 1868 Convention in Detroit to seek definite clarification of the matter without delay. The Convention voted:

To maintain the control and management of all their affairs in the hands of those who profess to love and publicly avow their faith in Jesus, the Redeemer, as divine, and who testify their faith by becoming and remaining members of churches held to be Evangelical, and that such persons and none others, should be allowed to vote or hold office (1868, p. 84).

Although careful not to criticize local Associations for providing otherwise, the Convention did declare its own view about what evangelical church relationships should be.

It was the convention at Portland a year later that approved local membership practice as the cornerstone of recognition and representation in the International Convention itself. It also attempted to amplify its action of the preceding year by defining in highly theological terms the word "evangelical." The since famous action reads as follows:

**RESOLVED**, that as these organizations bear the name of Christian

and profess to be engaged directly in the Savior's service, so it is clearly their duty to maintain the control and management of all their affairs in the hands of those who profess to love and publicly avow their faith in Jesus, the Redeemer, as Divine, and who testify their faith by becoming and remaining members of churches held to be Evangelical. And we hold those churches to be Evangelical which, maintaining the Holy Scriptures to be the only infallible rule of faith and practice, do believe in the Lord Jesus Christ (the only begotten of the Father, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, in whom dwelleth the fullness of the Godhead Bodily, and who was made sin for us, though knowing no sin, bearing our sins in His own body on the tree) as the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved from everlasting punishment.

RESOLVED, that the Associations organized after this date shall be entitled to representation in future conferences of the Associated Y.M.C.A. Associations of North America, upon condition that they be severally composed of young men in communion with Evangelical churches (provided that in places where Associations are formed by a single denomination, members of other denominations are not excluded therefrom) and active membership, and the right to hold office be conferred only upon young men who are members in good standing in Evangelical churches (1869, p. 101).

The Portland Convention was attended by 635 regular delegates from 226 Associations. It was thus the largest convention up to that time. But it would be a mistake to assume from this fact that the question of membership policy and evangelical church affiliation reflected the major interest of *lay* delegates. The debate was lively, but it was participated in chiefly by ministers. The committee that framed the adopted definition was composed of four ministers previously vocal in the debate, and one layman. This may account for the turn of thought as well as the language. Nonetheless, the new formulation became a pivotal pronouncement in the entire life of the Association Movement—an inflexible standard that permitted no variation until well into the new century, yet one which, as developments showed, was powerless to ensure the spiritual ends it was invoked to guarantee.

After the end of the old Confederation, only the Convention remained as the symbol of unity. The Associations could, and did, seek to apply their will at the one common focal point available to them. In 1867, they provided for delegations in proportion to membership in the local Association, stipulating that the computation be based upon *male* members only. Delegates themselves were required, moreover, to be *active* members. These provisions were confirmed a year later, along with the first action on the Evangelical Test. Thus at the Portland Convention in 1869, in making conformity to this "definition" a further condition of convention participation, the Associations

were merely extending their control of their only inter-Association medium. Such action was testimony of their belief in the potency of Convention to secure local conformity and to discourage variation on a policy deemed crucial in determining local effectiveness.

Was their belief justified? In general, the Portland action drew or selected an ever-increasing number of affiliating organizations counted "regular" by constitution and practice. In view of evidence already shown about other Associations that did not file official reports, many of which undoubtedly ignored the Portland action, the question may arise as to whether Associations desiring the more liberal policy were not at times the more numerous. If this was the fact, these Associations lacked a principle of cohesion strong enough to lead them

TABLE V  
PROPORTION OF ACTIVE MEMBERS FOR CERTAIN YEARS

	TOTAL MEMBERSHIP	ACTIVE MEMBERS	PER CENT	OTHERS	PER CENT
In 1886.....	132,803	64,361	48.5	68,442	51.5
In 1896.....	263,298	120,820	45.9	142,478	54.1
In 1900.....	268,477	123,887	46.1	144,590	53.9

to mobilize their dissenting views in some kind of competitive effort. The policy of Protestant evangelical affiliation and control emphatically won out. In limiting the convention participation to Associations accepting such affiliation and control, perhaps one of the major institutional adaptations of the Movement's history was made. The leadership, policies, and purposes would henceforth be broadly Protestant in character, and would partake of both the strength and weakness of American Protestantism.

While theologically minded leaders were working out the relationships and strategy of the wider Movement, the clientele of the local Associations grew apace. Fascinating activities and ready fellowship drew like magnets. The question of precise church status must have seemed inconsequential to the rank and file. Active members as such were formally reported in earlier decades. That they were continuously a minority by and after 1886 is shown by Table V (117).

The evangelical basis would certainly become primarily an organizational device for admission to inter-Association status and deliberations unless it could become identified closely with the local organization and the individual member. This it very largely failed to do. In the organization, the necessity for Associations being "regular" and "in good standing" turned more upon status and recognition in the national frame of reference than it did upon actual local requirements for useful service. Many Associations were formally "regular," but relatively ineffective (p. 265).

### III. ADAPTATION TO THE INTERESTS OF SPECIAL GROUPS

Adaptive capacity was revealed in the establishment of characteristic types of Young Men's Christian Associations among widely varied groups of young men. Not only in cities, but in academic, industrial, rural, and military settings, and in various racial and age groupings were these adaptations found. What were the dynamic factors in these applications of the principle of association among young men? What factors determined the constituencies approached and the measure of success obtained? (p. 232)

#### 1. *In the Cities*

Originating among groups of young men in the greater cities, the Y.M.C.A. quickly spread to other cities. The city Associations became and remained the dominant group in point of number of Associations and members, acquisition of property, and to a considerable degree in determination of program method. The creation of a new type of service building in such cities tended to establish the same type of approach among other groups, and to give tangible appeal and embodiment to the purpose which, stated theologically, might not attract many young men (100).

Early convention actions had held that the Association obligation was equally concerned with great cities and hamlets. So long as the organization was typically a fellowship group, the possibility of the smaller community sharing in the Movement was real. That many smaller towns did so organize and maintain Associations is shown by the fact that, of 542 city Associations in 1900, 214, or 39.4 per cent, were in towns of less than 10,000.

Associations were organized in practically all cities over 25,000 shown in the 1900 Census. Similar growth did not typically take place in the much more numerous smaller communities. There were Associations in about one-half of the cities of 10,000 to 25,000; one-fourth of those of 5,000 to 10,000; and one-eighth of those under 5,000. But the cities listed by the 1900 Census then included only 40.0 per cent of the population; only 8.3 per cent of the people lived in the 8,930 incorporated villages under 2,500; and 51.7 per cent still lived in smaller unincorporated villages or in the open country. Despite some promising beginnings, it was still problematic in 1900 how far the Y.M.C.A. could adapt itself to the rural field. It had become established in the city environment, and correlated with the complexity of life there.

Even in the cities, selective process was at work. Although the evangelistic zeal of leaders recognized no group as beyond their concern, the emphasis upon the young strangers pouring into the growing centers of business tended to draw those able to find work in business occupations. These were, at the start, primarily in the clerical

positions. In an occupational study of the membership in the Central Branch of the Chicago Association in 1901, for example, the groupings shown in Table VI were found.

The clerks ranged mainly from sixteen to thirty years of age, the most frequent age being nineteen. The managers were mainly above twenty-five, with the most frequent age group being those forty and over. Here is a probably typical single illustration of steps by which young men seeking success in the cities won recognition. Their own personal abilities, reinforced by helpful activities in the Associations,

TABLE VI  
OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF MEMBERS OF THE CENTRAL BRANCH, Y. M. C. A.,  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, IN 1900\*

OCCUPATION	MEMBERS	PER CENT
Clerks.....	1,928	50.2
Managers.....	589	15.4
Skilled Labor.....	402	10.3
Professional Men.....	334	8.7
Students.....	223	5.8
Unskilled Labor.....	71	1.8
Unclassified.....	291	7.8
Total.....	3,838	100.0

\*102, p. 42.

and aided by influential contacts, led many to open doors of opportunity in the business world. Thus predominating numerically in the typical city Association, they came the more readily to leadership, and in time developed or supported policies peculiarly identified with and appropriate to their class.

## 2. *In Industry*

The characteristic identification with business, rather than industrial groups, in the cities threw into sharp relief the capacity of the Associations to establish influential relationships among industrial workers. In the occupational analysis of members in the larger city Association referred to above, skilled and unskilled laborers comprised 12 per cent of the total. This was not an inconsiderable group, yet one likely to be overshadowed unless special concern were exercised to ensure their equal consideration in program, control, and other vital relationships.

In general, this result was not achieved. Comment to this effect received official recognition by a section of the official *Handbook* published in 1892 (116, p. 28), which included a chapter on "Work with Special Classes." It dealt with "Mechanical and Manufacturing Classes" in the following terms:

A large percentage of the male population in every city is engaged

in mechanical pursuits, and no class contains a better average of earnest, active, intelligent young men. And yet it is often said that the Associations do not reach and are not adapted to reach the industrial classes. The latter statement is certainly untrue, and if the first is in a measure correct, it is the fault not of the institution but of the membership and methods of the given locality. . . . There is no good reason why, with a proper adaptation of the means at hand in every city Association, large numbers of mechanics cannot be attracted to the reading room, the library, the classes, and lectures. The first step is an adaptation of means. Place on file in the reading room the best mechanical journals, something suited to each of the local industries, and including perhaps some expensive periodicals not apt to be found elsewhere. Put the standard works of reference on the library shelves, and add any valuable new book on mechanics as soon as issued. In arranging evening classes and the practical talks, provide something that will be especially helpful to apprentices.

A reception for "mechanics and manufacturers" was suggested, and the injunction given that the membership and invitation committee "should strive to obtain representatives in each establishment." Also, "that effort should be made to secure the good will and co-operation of employers and officers of corporations, who may render great assistance. There will often be prejudice, possibly an inclination to class jealousy on the part of some of the young men, which must be overcome by frank and kindly intercourse." Finally, "the general results of this work must not be overlooked. The affiliation of these young men with other classes in the Associations will not be without its social significance, and may perhaps help in solving some perplexing problems now pending before the country."

Although intentions must have been of the best, already the elements of class attitudes and cleavages were here apparent. Little here indicates the realities of the powerful economic and social issues that built up the modern labor movement during these very years. The Association, like the Protestant Church, did not become the natural channel or confidant of labor. It was conditioned through its own history toward an indirect and intermediate, if not actually partisan interest, on the side of the corporate policies of industry (26 and 37).

In one special industrial field, however, the Association idea took root early and deeply. In the 1868 Convention, the interest in young men related to the building of the transcontinental railway lines was such that a special missionary or agent was authorized—the first general staff representative on an employed or "secretarial" basis. The first Association expressly for railroad men was begun in Cleveland in 1872; to be followed by 160 others before the close of the century. As the new occupation of Y.M.C.A. secretary came into being, more than two hundred of them, or one in eight by 1900, were at work among these specialized Associations.

The first special building was erected in 1878 at Detroit; but this development remained casual until 1888, when the New York Central built a large building for the Association at the New York Terminal, and many others followed. In 1900, 54 railroad Associations owned and occupied buildings valued at \$713,335. In that year five additional buildings were under construction. In addition, entire buildings had been set aside by railroad companies for Association use at 28 other points.

Official endorsement and corporate support were always necessary. Current expenses aggregated \$417,196 in 147 reporting railroad Y.M.C.A.'s in 1900. It was stated that "at the beginning, the railroad corporations furnished 60 per cent and the employees 40 per cent;

TABLE VII  
THE ESTABLISHMENT OF RAILROAD ASSOCIATION WORK

	1866	1876	1886	1896	1900
R.R. Y.M.C.A.'s.....	None	9	66	108	161
Secretaries.....	None	3	69	128	224

steadily this pro rata was reversed, till in recent years 60 per cent is furnished by employees, and only 40 per cent by the corporations (99, p. 214). Whatever the precise percentage of current corporate support, it is evident that a measure of control must have existed on the part of the corporations over the affairs of the Associations. Such measure of control represented both the method and degree of adaptation of the Association idea to the railway industry, as the price of its establishment and survival in this field (pp. 255, 267).

Evidence exists that among the corporations were those who regarded the efforts of Y.M.C.A.'s as subject to, and of service to, the industrial policies of the companies. In a notable discussion on this subject in the Third International Conference of Christian Railroad Men in 1882 (page 18 of Report), sponsored by the Railroad Department of the International Committee, the following topic was included: "Has a railroad official the right to use the funds of the railroad company to aid the Young Men's Christian Association in its work for railroad men?" The discussion by W. R. Davenport, a high railway official, merits careful examination. He indicated that, though this question had been occasionally discussed ten years previously, it would have been difficult then to find anyone willing to give an affirmative answer. He told of certain officials who had been afraid even to grant a request to hold a religious meeting on company premises, but who

in their official capacity have since sent trusted messengers amongst railroad men, east and west, investigating the work of the Young Men's Christian Associations, and have become convinced that they cannot afford to resist this movement; that they cannot afford not

to invest money that this work may be carried on among their employees. . . . Railroad corporations seem to have made a similar discovery of late, and have been calling Christian men and placing them in the highest positions of trust. . . . These men have found that what has been placed in the hands of these sons of God, has prospered. . . . The shrewdest of men, the most careful managers, are now ready to appropriate money for this purpose; and the response they make to their stockholders is, "We are making money for you by it."

The speaker dwelt at length on the industrial crises of 1877. Citing that "Europe is pouring upon our shores by the tens of thousands men trained to wrong ideas under its despoticisms," who have "become a disturbing element in our midst," "gathering today in our great cities," "forming secret societies," he stated that "they are fomenting disturbance, teaching that there is between capital and labor an irrepressible conflict." He held that, since railway men are not accustomed to go much to the churches, the Young Men's Christian Association must "go into the highway" and "take the Gospel to them."

To close his argument, this speaker told of a strike-bound terminal in 1877 following a religious revival that had reached many railway men. When a severe crisis approached, and militia were called elsewhere, the Christian railroad men asked to be armed, protected the property, drove disturbance out of town, turned the scale, and brought about a reconciliation. Said the speaker,

What we propose to do is to extend this railroad department throughout the country, saying to railroad officials, "Gentlemen, if you have a right to build a snow-shed with the company's money, . . . if you have a right to spend money in any other way to protect destruction and detention, then you have the right, yea more, you are solemnly bound to protect us whose interests have been handed into your hands—our bodies, our property, our families, everything."

At this same convention, testimonies were received from scores of railway officials. It was the General Secretary of the International Committee, however, who wrote in 1912 that

What was being accomplished among the railroad employees attracted the attention of members and friends of other industrial classes, and led to such wide extension of this form of work into the industrial world, that a special Industrial Department was formed in 1903, and an industrial secretary appointed (99, p. 216).

The acceptance for the Y.M.C.A. of such a rôle in relation to radical tendencies was not limited to industrialists, nor to Association leaders. An editorial writer in *Harper's Magazine*, in a long eulogistic discussion of the Y.M.C.A. in 1882, contrasted "the dreaded International" whose symbols were "the explosive shell and torch" centered in

Geneva, with "the combination of the Young Men's Christian Associations of the world in 1878 (also at Geneva) compacted at London in 1881."

Here then we have a new force [the writer asserted] which from the simplest beginnings has grown to be most efficacious in promoting good order, good morals, and religion. It is well to place these two "internationals" side by side in our thoughts, and to dwell upon the possibilities of each. Every force which helps to conserve society is welcome to the citizen and the statesman; and nothing is so effective in conserving social order as the Christian religion (118).

### *3. In Rural Areas*

It has been stated that the early Associations found ready soil in the smaller towns, but that they suffered a high mortality. This was especially true during the middle years of the period from 1870 to 1890; but in the years just before 1900, 214, or 39.4 per cent, of all city Associations were in cities of less than 10,000 population. But there were in 1900, 8,930 incorporated villages under 2,500 population in which (together with lesser villages or open country) fully 60 per cent of the nation's population lived.

In Robert Weidensall, sent in 1868 for special missionary work along the Pacific Railroad, the Movement had one who staunchly believed that some form of Association expression was practical in any community (113). Weidensall conceived that smaller communities in a county area could join effectively in "county" Associations, the first of which was organized in 1873 in Illinois. He considered the county a sufficient area to secure and support the services of a secretary to guide a program of activities generally similar to those of city Associations except for building features. A few such employed leaders were set to work before 1900, but the more vigorous establishment of Associations of this type came afterward. Concern for such adaptation of the Association's services to rural youth continued to be expressed. The 1897 International Convention resolved

That in view of the vast numbers of young men residing in towns, villages, and rural communities for whom no organized work is being done, and in view of the tentative efforts being made in some states to reach them, and in view of the growing conviction among our Associations everywhere that we must undertake in some way to accomplish our mission to these young men, the International Committee be instructed to take this entire subject into consideration and to formulate and present to the next convention, if possible, such plans and methods for prosecuting this work as, in its judgment, will best meet the varying needs of different sections and secure unity and efficiency in the work (1897, p. 51).

But the next Convention had other urgent considerations before it, and this subject did not receive marked attention, although experimental organization of the "county" type of Associations was aggressively promoted by those who believed in them.

Thus the early years of attempted adaptations of the Y.M.C.A. to rural conditions seemed only to emphasize the dominance of the city pattern. Increasingly, the smallest cities found it impossible to copy or adapt this pattern. The question was frankly raised whether the Association Movement had a significant mission in the rural field. Furthermore, the extension of organized State Committees did not alter the basic conditions, nor balance in rural areas the increasing concentration of Associations in cities.

#### 4. *In Racial and Nationality Groupings*

It is appropriate first to describe Association adaptations with reference to two groups indigenous to American soil: the Negroes and the Indians.

As for the *colored Associations*, the Executive Committee reported at the Montreal Convention in 1867 the organization during that year of such Associations in Charleston, S. C., Harrisburg, Pa., Washington, D. C., and New York City, a delegate from the latter being present. This convention formally requested the delegates of *all Associations* "to aid in the formation of colored Associations throughout the South."

If colored young men, South or North, had had any previous contact with the early Associations, except possibly in the colleges, there is no evidence to this effect. The principle of segregation was apparently accepted without question in both northern and southern cities. Despite the appearance of a few colored Associations before that time, colored leaders considered the real beginning of the specialized colored work to have been the appeal in the 1875 Convention at Richmond, Virginia, through a petition presented by the colored pastors of that city (85). The response then and in the subsequent Convention permitted the addition of a national staff leader in 1879. He was not a colored man. The first colored secretary, W. A. Hunton, afterwards leader of this work on the International Committee staff, was employed in 1888 at Norfolk, Virginia (155).

The Association idea adapted itself to the colored group effectively, and established its typical forms of activity at least in the city and college centers. It accepted the principle of segregation in common with religious and other organizations, and was influenced thereby in all subsequent matters affecting racial service and interracial collaboration.

The Negro group had special problems that made it natural for them to use the newly available fellowship of this voluntary association as a rallying center for racial concerns. They were willing to accept

the equal recognition of the organizational units as substantial evidence of the democratic ideals implied in the Christian purposes of the Y.M.C.A.

The twenty-three colored Associations existing in 1900 in the cities were located, with six exceptions, in southern states. The impoverished South had few resources, and the southern Negro communities slender means, for copying the typical development of plant and program presently available to white young men almost everywhere in the cities. Leadership on behalf of colored young men was built up especially after Hunton, a distinguished leader of much ability, came to the national staff. With him and those gathered around him, a firm foundation was laid for the later substantial reinforcement through the Rosenwald beneficence and the notable advances of the period following 1900.

In the case of the *North American Indians*, fast being forced back into their reservations, a pioneer Association was organized among the Sioux in 1879. Both in the colleges and in reservation communities, these Associations showed genuine vigor. They developed largely the non-equipment rural programs, and were led by a national Indian staff leader named in 1894. In 1900, forty-four Indian Associations existed, nine of them in Indian schools. In this adjustment, the Association again demonstrated its capacity to embrace another distinct grouping of young men in its fellowship.

With the *German and other nationality groups*, especially the German, the Association idea became emphatically identified. German immigrant classes had early been singled out for concern because among them were many of rationalist tendencies inimical to evangelical aims. Early special efforts to reach these through usual evangelistic methods were not very effective. It was believed that special group organization might utilize the bonds of common language for gradual education in the democratic conceptions underlying lay initiative, and for responsibility in the field of moral and religious effort. Branches were slowly developed in the larger German population centers, such as Pittsburgh (1875), Milwaukee (1876), Brooklyn (1878), St. Louis (1879), Boston (1880), Louisville (1880), New York City (1881); and others, including Buffalo, well into the '80's.

Special staff promotion was supplied by the International Committee for a period of years. A general policy for extending a German department was clearly stated in the 1887 Convention.

Whether the difficulty of developing lay leaders continued to increase, or the required subsidies were too slight, the organization of separate German branches presently ceased. It had reached the number of seventy-seven in the seventies, but from 1886 to 1896 their number dwindled down to nine. The International convention in 1899 urged

upon all the local Associations special efforts to reach and benefit German speaking young men through participation in regular branches (1899, p. 61).

The attempted Association adaptation, through the foreign-language branch, has significance out of proportion to the number of centers involved. The social significance of maintaining unimpaired the native cultures of immigrant groups under the conditions of the American melting pot will hardly be questioned. But the terms and conditions for achieving this end were necessarily baffling. German evangelical religious patterns retained many institutional forms, doubtless from the Lutheran tradition. Moreover, as aliens or new Americans, they were approached on a basis involving substantial independence from clergy, if not of the church.

Moreover, characteristic organizational (i.e., branch) and equipment patterns arose to which they did not find it easy to give the requisite economic or emotional support. Under such conditions, it is not surprising that the Y.M.C.A.'s tentative adaptation to the foreign-culture groups in America failed. The specializing German Associations finally disappeared altogether, though German immigration continued to increase for many years. Many German youth certainly found their way into the local Associations open to them in every principal city, but did so as Americans, without reference to the preservation of significant native-culture traits.

Indeed, the Association sometimes sought, as with the French-Canadian group, to eradicate such cultural backgrounds. This group was discussed in the 1895 Convention in the following terms:

One of the most important questions before this land today is, shall this country continue American, shall the men of foreign birth and parentage among us become true Americans? We have welcomed them here, and almost within a few hours they become citizens. But what we most desire is to bring them to faith and life in Christ. To this end we welcome them to the Young Men's Christian Associations.

Another speaker pressed the issue of immigration from Canada as

a problem difficult and complex. Every day increases its importance, because of the rising tide of French-Canadian immigration which is peopling the New England states. The number of these immigrants in New England and New York exceeds 500,000. They have gradually filled our manufacturing centers, where they continue to form separate communities, indifferent if not adverse, to our customs and institutions (1895, p. 113).

A French department was urged for in every Association where there was a numerous French-Canadian population, with a special bilingual

staff and original methods of appeal. Others summed up the type of emphasis needed by stressing Christianity as an "Americanizing" force.

The "Americanization" emphasis, as related to the immigrant industrial worker, and largely without branch or department implications, grew much stronger in the Industrial Department's activities following 1900. Some special branches or "institutes" were also later organized among Orientals, and groups along the Mexican border.

The problem of the immigrant young men appealed to early Association leaders. In 1869, the Convention resolved

That in the greatly increased immigration from all parts of the world to the United States, we recognize the hand of God, and rejoice in the enlarged opportunity of sowing seed beside all waters, and that it is the duty of our young men to watch, labor and pray that God may lead them to reach all classes of foreigners arriving on our shores, and especially the Chinese and other Asiatic races (1869, p. 102).

In general, however, it may be said that the attempt to adapt accepted Y.M.C.A. organization and methods to new immigrant groups in the United States was not too successful. At the same time, there were the beginnings of a fresh sense of identity between the American Associations and those of other lands, evidenced by their participation in the continuing world conferences of the Association, the publication of statistics of foreign Associations in the annual *Year Books*, the rise of the Student Missionary Movement in 1887, the founding of Associations under American leadership in Asia, and continued international visitations such as those of the founder of the London Association, Sir George Williams, to the United States in 1876; and the world tours of L. D. Wishard and John R. Mott in 1895.

The confidence of the Associations in the validity of their mission to diverse groups remained unimpaired, as did their belief in their ability to adapt their services. The 1895 convention rejoiced

in the accumulated evidence of the adaptability of the Young Men's Christian Association to minister most effectively to the various classes of young men, first, by discovering to them their capacities and needs, and second, by ministering to those capacities and needs in such a manner as to develop citizens of the highest type (1895, p. 100).

##### 5. *In the Colleges and Universities*

Just as the earliest organizations of city Y.M.C.A.'s were preceded by other religious societies of young men, so the earliest known college Young Men's Christian Associations, begun at the University of Michigan and the University of Virginia in 1858, were variations of already existing societies in other institutions (108).

Of twenty-two such student societies that responded to the invitation of the Philadelphia Society of Princeton University to attend the 1877 International Convention at Louisville, all but two were founded after the Civil War. The Philadelphia Society, with a long history, modified its local constitution to permit affiliation with the Y.M.C.A., and sent the call to some two hundred colleges and normal schools. Its spokesman at the convention said that less than fifty out of three hundred to four hundred existing institutions had at that time any form of student Christian organization.

Earlier Conventions had often included college students. One who had been instrumental in forming the Association at the University of Michigan in 1858 pleaded in the 1868 Convention for the wide organization of the college field, but there was little response. The Conventions of 1874, 1875, and 1876 had also discussed the experience of college Associations to some extent. These discussions emphasized the isolation of colleges, the "community" character of campus life, the inappropriateness of college churches, the necessity of reaching students through students and, hence, the urgency of distinctive college Christian Associations to dominate the college environment through indigenous organization. Notwithstanding these arguments, the International Committee, though mentioning the existence of thirty-four college Associations in its 1875 report, sent out the call to the Louisville Convention in 1877 without reference to the student work. Its formal report did not include recommendations on this subject, although the railroad, colored, and German groups were specifically dealt with. Nevertheless, the twenty-five college delegates, including certain professors, were determined to achieve intercollegiate affiliation, and consequent recognition by the Convention as an integral part of the Association Movement. They demanded a pledge of leadership by the International Committee in developing Associations throughout the American colleges, and the Convention granted this appeal. A national staff leader, L. D. Wishard, was assigned during the year following (162).

From the beginnings, the number of student Associations increased very rapidly. The Jubilee *Year Book* in 1901 carried the following table:

TABLE VIII  
THE ESTABLISHMENT OF STUDENT ASSOCIATION WORK

	1866	1876	1886	1896	1900
Student Associations.....	1	35	226	480	577
Secretaries Employed.....	None	None	1	18	38

In accepting relationship to the college field and finally sponsoring this fresh extension of contact and service, the Associations of the seventies were impressed with the size of the field; but they also assumed that college-trained men were destined for leadership in community life, and

should, in a few years, be available to help make city and other Associations more vital and effective.

From the organization's standpoint, as compared with other special groups of young men in relation to whom adaptations of its work were attempted, the college group was clearly unique in at least the following respects:

- (a) Campuses comprised a ready-organized, isolated community life, housed, compact, in the main free of employed obligations, with resulting freedom to develop voluntary Associations. The services so provided in the city buildings were in considerable part already available under college auspices.
- (b) The environment of the American college was surely not to be compared with the temptations and dangers young men faced in the cities, or in other situations where young men away from home influences needed association for mutual moral aid. Yet real perils there doubtless were in the campus community, the resistance of which it became a chief aim of the student Associations to meet. In this respect, the student Associations emphasized, in their more clearly defined environment, the principle of democratic group organization *within* the existing campus community.
- (c) The trend of religious thought in these years took much account of the presence of skepticism as the impact of scientific advance and modern philosophy made itself felt. President Mark Hopkins of Williams College at the 1871 Convention, speaking on "Modern Skepticism in its Relations to Young Men—How shall it be met by our Associations?" sought to defend liberal thought, the acceptance of all truth from whatever quarter, and the personal embodiment of "that living faith we would produce in others" (1871, 64). The "godless" institutions created by the Morrill Act of 1862, and supported by President Lincoln for the fostering of agricultural and mechanical arts necessary to the development of American civilization were themselves deemed to constitute a special danger and challenge.<sup>2</sup> In this relation, a delegate from the Cornell University Association in the 1874 Convention pleaded for "every Christian man and woman throughout the length and breadth of the land to insist that, while every state institution is undenominational, it must not be un-Christian."
- (d) Finally, the college constituency was sometimes, though at first infrequently, co-educational. Higher education for women was inaugurated at Oberlin in 1837, and slowly copied elsewhere. By 1875, the early Convention discussions that assumed the established approach to the young men separately were sharply challenged by a delegate. His objection was overruled,

<sup>2</sup> The Morrill Act, commonly referred to as the Land Grant Act, allocated tracts of government lands in every state for the founding and maintenance of institutions of higher learning, from which developed the present-day state universities and state colleges.

however, and the college Association accepted the pattern of "work for young men by young men," which had emerged as an established conviction after long years of debate and much fruitless experimentation with more varied forms of activity.

But the adjustment process was not one sided. Student Associations brought certain notable contributions into the total Y.M.C.A. development, such as:

- (a) The Student Summer Conference, inaugurated on the initiative of the International Student Secretary and the invitation of Dwight L. Moody at Northfield, Mass. From this first conference, lasting almost a month and assembling 248 students from 89 colleges, may be traced the origin of the Lake Geneva College Conference, begun in 1890; and others of later origin. The direct influence and result of these two great centers, both within and beyond the immediate field of the college Associations, can hardly be estimated. It must have been very great, restating the evangelistic aims of the college work, and setting standard methods for their realization that influenced all Y.M.C.A. methodology (107).
- (b) The modern missionary emphasis recognized as a part of the student Christian Movement from this first Northfield Student Conference in 1886. Here the cause of missionary work among non-Christian peoples was so convincingly presented and seriously pondered that a mass commitment to life service abroad resulted on the part of 100 of the 248 in attendance. From this unprecedented experience arose the Student Volunteer Movement as a distinct movement uniting both Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A. interests in foreign missionary service, and a strong educational influence for international good will and obligation. Some of the individuals at this first Northfield meeting, notably, John R. Mott, afterward became world figures in all forms of Christian activity. Others in foreign-service posts were led to organize college Christian Associations like those they had known in America, and led the way to world-wide extension of Y.M.C.A. services and co-operation.
- (c) The World's Student Christian Federation was organized in 1895, largely through the initiative and advocacy of Mott. His first world tour in 1896-7 established an international fellowship of Christian youth. Though always operating independently of the World's Alliance of Y.M.C.A.'s, this international agency through its relation to the student Associations affected the world outlook of all Y.M.C.A.'s.

#### *6. Among the Military Forces*

The vigorous response of the pioneer Y.M.C.A.'s on behalf of young men called to the Civil War armies was not continued after the coming of peace. A few instances of casual service among militia or

national guard camps were reported, chiefly by State or Provincial Committees (as in Ontario in 1871, in New York in 1887), and a few others. The provision of a large central tent with writing materials and reading matter, in charge of a secretary skilful in personal contacts, represented the scope of this service. In some instances entertainment, lectures, and religious features were added. It remained for the Spanish war, at the close of the century, to call the formally organized services of the Y.M.C.A. again into being. This led twenty years later to the far more extensive participation in the World War.

The concern of the Associations to serve young men of military establishments in peace time grew steadily. Questions of method were earnestly debated in certain conventions. In 1895, General O. O. Howard presented the topic "Christian Work in the Army," in which he compared the field and need with the then widely recognized railroad service. He discussed the extent, rôle, and limitations of the chaplaincy, and suggested cautiously the possibility that "the Association method of help" might reach the garrisons. The general cited the value of one such voluntary group developed by a quartermaster at Fortress Monroe, but held it would not do to leave such a work to voluntary effort. He urged the experiment of placing "an experienced secretary" in such military garrisons.

In spite of these favorable suggestions, the Conventions did not undertake this work as a major effort until 1898, at the beginning of the Spanish-American War. The International Committee met immediately after President McKinley's call for volunteers, organized a special sub-committee called "The Army and Navy Christian Commission" (103), and undertook a field service among regular and volunteer forces. This work required 176 specially assigned secretaries and made expenditures, including those of State Committees and local groups, of \$135,000 during the few months of the war. As a result of this second war emergency service, requests came from the military departments for a permanent adaptation of this work to peace-time establishments. These led the International Committee in 1898 to establish its Army and Navy Department and undertake this permanent work with great earnest. The official summary of this experience by the newly organized Army and Navy Department of the International Committee referred to negotiations looking toward the opening of Association work in the navy early in 1898, before war was believed near. This did not come to fruition before war broke. The Committee felt

certain that this conflict brought to the Young Men's Christian Association an unprecedented opportunity for a mighty service to those young men who uphold the nation's honor on land and sea [and said], Here was a call of God which could be unheeded only at gravest peril (117, 1899, p. 11ff.).

At the succeeding International Convention, in 1899, a letter was

read from President McKinley, which mentioned his visit to the first Navy Y.M.C.A. in Brooklyn, and commended

the efforts that are being made to bring this ennobling influence more and more within reach of our soldiers and sailors (1898, p. 50).

The Brooklyn Navy Y.M.C.A., which began work in a modest rented building, was greatly extended through gifts from Miss Helen Gould and later from Mrs. Russell Sage, and became an experimental center, the immediate success of which encouraged an extensive development of the army and navy services.

#### *7. Among Other Adult Groups*

The Associations saw responsibility in comprehensive terms. "How can Associations reach all classes of young men?" was the question discussed in the 1874 and many subsequent Conventions.

The establishment in New York in 1872 of a special "Bowery Branch" greatly stimulated interest in destitute young men. This branch inaugurated a formal if complex method of service that had extended influence, though it was not widely copied. The Associations increasingly sought to center their work in prevention, and left largely to other organizations, such as the Salvation Army, the needs of this destitute group of young men. The evangelistic purpose which, under certain circumstances, might have led even to specialization in such "rescue" work, tended in the case of the Y.M.C.A. to direct its concern quite definitely toward the more fortunate and doubtless more typical young men of the cities. Yet the Associations found ways, then and since, to assist self-respecting young men without means through work, loans, membership privileges at reduced or no charge, and the like, to tide over periods of unemployment and need.

The approach to the "criminal classes" was urged in the 1874 Convention by the Chairman of a State Board of Charities. To him, it involved a major attack on the public sale of "strong drink," to which "seven-tenths of the crimes of this country are directly traceable"; some direct work in the jails (religious services in jails were common in some Associations); concern especially for neglected children; and a new attitude regarding "depravity" because of "faith in the adaptation and power of the Gospel." The speaker praised the mission Sunday schools carried on by some Associations as "the most direct and efficient police force any community can have." This appeal antedated by some years the general development of a specialized work among boys, with its accompanying Christian character and citizenship emphasis as an effective program of crime prevention.

The view gained headway that the Association ought to be identified even in its work among boys with the middle social-economic groups. McBurney, peerless in his influence, questioning the reported

experience of the Newark Association that had been conducting some work among underprivileged boys, said in 1887

It is our business to reach the average young man and the average boy. In most places the Children's Aid Societies and kindred organizations are making special efforts to reach the lower classes of boys. If the Association seeks the lower classes of boys, it must do so exclusively, as it could not safely reach the middle classes in the same place. The contact would not be practicable or desirable (1887, p. 87).

However, this policy was to be justified. The Associations received strong public support for their contribution made to the average or normal type of young men and boys through their established activities. Such an example is the editorial of the *San Francisco Examiner*, following the Convention held in San Francisco in 1887, which described and commended its aim as

less that of picking men out of the gutter than that of helping them keep their feet and never get there. To this end it supplies those moral aids which experience has sanctioned as efficient, and can rest the wisdom of its adopted policy on the adage that commends prevention above cure (1887, p. 95).

Still other adult groups received some attention. Lumbermen were discussed in 1883 as a group worthy of organized approach. At a later period a few such centers were established in districts where large industrial developments existed. This did not become a typical or permanent field of adaptation. Still another group, the commercial travelers, promised for a time to be such, but was later lost sight of. These traveling salesmen, being socially gifted, were seen as potentially influential for evangelistic contacts. A representative of this group presented its claims at the Convention in 1879. In 1886, seventy-eight Associations reported doing some such work, chiefly through "invitations." But characteristic identification with them as a group did not appear.

#### 8. *Among Boys*

The influence that led to concentration upon a work for young men tended as well to defer the recognition of a needed specialization of work among boys. Even when such work became widespread, it was commonly considered as merely introductory to the work among young men, and justified as such. The pressure for evangelistic efforts was immediate and urgent, the responsibility current, to be discharged now. The failure to reach such goals immediately meant to prolong the period of effort, as well as possibly to diversify the method. While this was going on, other boys became young men. Time and failure made the problems essentially one.

Methods of approach represented largely junior versions of prevailing methods. As early as 1866, the Richmond and Baltimore Associations reported special religious meetings for boys, and the latter conducted a home for newsboys. It was reported in 1869 that the Fall River Association had "demonstrated the fact that boys from eight to sixteen can be reached by this work. They have a boys' reading room, with illustrated papers, where upwards of seventy have been in attendance on a single evening" (1869, p. xxxii).

The first formally organized "Boys Department" was reported at Salem, Mass., in 1869, but this remained unique for some time. Only in 1874 was it counted significant to report items regarding boys' work activities to the International Committee. Such items were generally seen as "boys' meetings," changing in 1880 to a broader title "work for boys," on which forty-eight Associations sent reports. These distinguished between "religious" and "secular" features according to the program philosophy of the time. The number of Associations so reporting grew each year:

TABLE IX  
ASSOCIATIONS REPORTING BOYS' WORK TO 1900\*

	1866	1876	1886	1896	1900
Associations reporting . . . . .	2	8	148	328	401

\*117, 1901.

The first modern New York building erected in 1868-9 assigned no space to boys' activities as such. It was not long, however, before the need of such provision was apparent. The device of permitting the use of young men's rooms for boys at certain hours proved impractical. Separate rooms became necessary and common. The new West Side building in New York, erected in 1897, allowed 20 per cent of its space for boys' work.

As a Convention topic, boys' work first won the attention of the Association Movement in 1885, a discussion centered in the problems of boy participation in state gatherings, and dimly suggestive of the notable State Older Boys' Conferences of later years. Probably the first careful statement of the best experience and philosophy to that time occurred in the 1887 International Convention under the title "The Province and Best Methods of Work for Boys in the Y.M.C.A.," in which, among other constructive criticism of prevailing methods, occurred some fundamental observations on the democratic aspect of boy participation:

The practice of the majority of Associations in putting the work into the hands of a committee selected because of its special fitness to deal with this case, and permitting the boys with proper advice and consent to elect their own officers, seems to be the wisest plan to pursue. . . . After the boys have been graduated into the Asso-

ciation, it is wise to put some of the more capable of them on the boys' work committees (1887, p. 61).

These novel suggestions were not approved by all who heard them, but they signify the emerging conviction about self-government that early identified boys' work with citizenship training.

While these steps of progress were being taken, individual laymen and secretaries appeared whose devotion and vision of intrinsic possibilities of specialized boys' work won a large degree of support. Such a man was Sumner F. Dudley, whose leadership in New York State over many years did much to give direction to the new emphasis. He gave his name to the pioneer camp for boys, Camp Dudley, which completed in 1936 fifty years of continuous camping service, symbolizing a growing and potent aspect of the boys' work movement. As a staff member, Dudley antedated by fully ten years the first boys' work portfolio in the rapidly growing International Committee staff, inaugurated in 1900 by E. M. Robinson.

A revealing summary of boys' work items from 344 Associations in 1900 showed growth and elaboration of the boys' work emphasis. Committees in charge of boys' work were reported in 228 Associations; 129 Associations reported 218 rooms used exclusively for boys' work; 122 Associations reported 2,157 laymen working on boys' work committees; 107 Associations reported separate boys' camps, with 2,109 attending; 47 reported 90 boys' clubs; 183 reported 4,762 religious meetings; 190 reported 1,522 boys graduating into the Association (117, 1901, p. 140).

Organizational status was not easily determined. Was the boys' work a true part of the local Association work? How should control and costs be assured? If there was to be a "junior department," with boys "graduating into the Association," something less than genuine integration was apparent. Should there be a boys' membership; and, if so, should the distinctions between active and associate, to which many attached great importance, be observed?

As yet, also, the task of guiding this emerging activity was not deemed highly specialized, though it was becoming so. One notes the predominating religious meetings, and only the beginnings of club activity. Few specializing secretaries were as yet in evidence in the boys' work field, the general secretary himself usually giving the leadership, however stereotyped his practices had become from his work with young men. The insights from modern psychology were only beginning to be defined, and the first modern efforts toward experimental education centered in the child were taking shape only at the close of the century.

The International Committee accepted responsibility for national leadership of boys' work through providing an executive for it in 1900, after the General Secretaries' Association had pledged a large part of

the necessary support (117, 1901, p. 24). The first incumbent of this significant post, after an extended tour, noted

the great interest manifested by both local and state authorities, the large projects under consideration in many leading Associations, the plans of several Associations for boys' buildings, the rapidly increasing number of boys' work secretaries, the special interest taken in efforts for employed boys, and the place given to the discussion of boys' work at state conventions and training schools. The statement that work for boys is not in any way inferior in importance to the work for men, he said, is accepted by many, though not by all (117, 1901, p. 70).

The Association Movement, in adapting its outlook and program to include this younger age group, had to break sharply with patterns around the young men's emphasis, which had begun to carry considerable institutional significance. That it was ultimately able to do so, however unwillingly at the first, is testimony of first importance. But the resulting influences require careful study. From the period of ascendancy of boys' work may be traced a declining emphasis upon the young man, upon the "departmental" approach, upon the "sacred-secular" contrast, and to a degree upon the evangelistic interest itself.

#### 9. *Among Women*

In discussing the earlier period of Association development, reference was made to the timidity with which leaders inquired in early Conventions as to whether there were any experience with the attendance of women at the religious meetings of young men. Some had found this helpful.

The legal status of the women members of the Y.M.C.A.'s was not easily determined. The Confederation Convention of 1858 had heard thankfully of the "ladies Auxiliary Christian Association" at Charleston, S. C. In 1858 a delegate had argued for including both young men and young women together in the membership. Had his view met with approval, it would have changed the course of Association history profoundly. In 1865, the Executive Committee itself proposed general discussion of the question "Why may not the ladies be admitted as co-operators in the labors of an Association?" It was the subject of formal actions of the Conventions of 1867, 1868, and 1869 that are worthy of careful review.

In 1867, the Convention voted a pro-rata representation plan based on local membership, and added "Representation to be based on *male* membership only."

In 1868, the Convention found it necessary to be more explicit. It resolved

That it is neither the province nor the duty of this Convention to decide upon the question of the propriety of admitting ladies to membership in Young Men's Christian Associations, but that each Association must decide that matter for itself, upon consideration of all the circumstances by which it is surrounded; and

That this convention adheres to the rule prescribing the rate of representation as fixed by the Montreal Convention (1867) the same being computed upon an enumeration of all active members (1868, p. 127).

This last action, in effect, waived the "male" limitation. A further action related to calculating the allowable representation on the basis of members who had paid their dues. In 1868, also, the first evangelical basis resolution did not use the words "young men" but "persons." In 1869, however, the historic evangelical basis action established permanently that Associations would be recognized only if their local membership were composed of "*young men* in communion with Evangelical churches," and that, "active membership, and the right to hold office be conferred only upon *young men* who are members in good standing in Evangelical churches."

With such clarification of the general policy regarding the woman member, it seems anomalous that many years were to pass before the Associations finally concentrated their energies upon the chosen work for young men. Morse estimated that the growing concentration required from 1870 to 1895 finally to establish itself firmly (99, p. 120).

The advent of local Young Women's Christian Associations, though hailed with satisfaction, did not entirely clear the situation. The 1868 Convention had formally recommended "the organization of Young Women's Christian Associations throughout the land." The Convention of 1869, which stood so emphatically for "male" membership and representation as the basis for convention recognition, also welcomed the organized Y.W.C.A.'s warmly, stating:

WHEREAS Christian ladies in various sections of our country, actuated by a desire to promote Evangelical religion among young women, and impressed with the importance of combined effort to aid in accomplishing that object, have formed Young Women's Christian Associations in accordance with the recommendation made by the Detroit (preceding) Convention, be it

RESOLVED that the Young Men's Christian Associations of the United States and British Provinces in convention assembled extend to the Young Women's Christian Associations, Christian greetings, and agree to co-operate with so desirable an auxiliary (1869, p. 52).

The final wording indicates clearly, however, the light in which the innovation was regarded.

The advent of Women's Auxiliaries followed. These had no relation whatever to the Y.W.C.A. They were fully organized societies,

whose purpose was "to aid the Association in its work for young men," yet whose organized relation even to the Y.M.C.A. was often not close. In 1883 more than one hundred such were reported. As their activities diversified, the judgment grew that a less formal organization of a committee type was preferable, more easily controlled, more satisfactory. The *Handbook* of 1891 recognized such Women's Committees as a necessary part of efficient local Y.M.C.A. organization; also, their work in social ways, in the rooms, and in the library, was widely appreciated. The number of Associations with such Women's Committees totaled five hundred in 1890, and remained between five and six hundred through the following decade.

In this adjustment of relations with women, as in the case of adjustment to boys' work, may be noted one of the most determining adaptations of Y.M.C.A. history. The natural extension of concern to the millions of boys who would soon be young men also reaffirmed the Movement's commitment to service with males only. It is conceivable that it might have been deemed feasible, or desirable, at certain junctures, to accept the age limitation implicit in the young men's emphasis, but to broaden its application to include young women. That this did not take place was probably due to the strength which the formula—"a work exclusively for young men" acquired in the early years of the post-Civil War period. In this example, may be seen an essentially institutional manifestation.

#### IV. ADJUSTMENT OF PROGRAM AND METHOD TO SPECIAL NEEDS

If partial failure in the immediate achievement of individual evangelistic results among young men played a part in adapting Association effort to the needs of boys, it led also to diversified methods of contact and program approaches among both groups. Almost from the beginnings in 1851, the need for "rooms" was felt not only as a place for meetings, but also for contacts and fellowship in which individual young men who were objects of their evangelistic efforts were warmly welcomed. The addition of reading facilities, refreshment services, classes, employment aid, represented beginnings of diversification which were, during the period from 1866 to 1900, to become established in a number of highly institutionalized departments. These specialized program emphases, especially the physical, educational, social (including economic), and religious aspects, and the characteristic buildings require some review (pp. 237, 252).

##### 1. *Physical*

Specialized physical activities were at first not regarded as necessary or legitimate undertakings for Associations seeking spiritual improvement of young men. The first proposal regarding such activities made in the International convention in 1856 was rejected (p. 17). Sub-

stantially the same statement was approved four years later. The Convention then stressed the gymnasium as an appeal to young men that would attract them from "the allurements of objectionable places of resort," and emphasized "scientific apparatus." There were as yet no gymnasiums. The Brooklyn Association's plan to build a gymnasium in 1860 was unsuccessful. The New York Association, which amended in 1866 its statement of objectives to include the word "physical," realized its hopes in the new building opened in 1869 with modern gymnasium facilities (152, p. 80).

Timely though this physical emphasis may have been, and welcome to young men, it was not integrated into the existing program of Y.M.C.A. activity without difficulty. The question of competent leadership became urgent. Men were gathered to lead this work largely from the world of sport, or because of individual interest or ability in some phase of sport. There was as yet no science of physical education. Few were skilled as teachers. Few indeed were Christian. Morse, in his history, said that these problems caused anxiety over at least twenty-five years. It was feared that the physical interest, admitted to the recognized Association program as a means toward evangelization, might finally "secularize" the program entirely. One outstanding gymnasium superintendent (as physical directors were called for many years), Robert J. Roberts of the Boston Association, gave an objective demonstration before the 1861 International Convention by conducting a gymnasium class on the platform. He expounded certain fundamental principles of "body-building work," and stressed the constructive function of "safe, short, easy, beneficial, and pleasing" exercises, adapted to the needs of the busy members of the Associations, to whom this emphasis, however fundamental in value, seemed only marginal. Interest became very great, however, and these conceptions were widely approved.

However, gymnasiums appeared much more rapidly than did trained leaders, as Table X shows.

Meetings of secretaries had been held annually since 1871. The physical department leaders did not participate until 1888, when seventeen were present. They were led by Dr. Luther H. Gulick, a recent medical graduate. Gulick became one of the most astute philosophers of the Association, contributing the conception of the "triangle"—body, mind, and spirit—which, however, he conceived as representing the *unity* of personality. Rooted in the philosophies of the classical past, Gulick's conception was not original in itself, but only in the attempt he made to popularize the "all-round" character of the development sought. This conception became increasingly a characterization of the Association's program problem, as it did the symbol of its hope. The departmentalism of its services tended to prevent the integration of its impact, and consequently the full realization of its aim.

A discussion in the 1887 Convention on "The Association Gym-

nasium, its Place and Usefulness in our Work," presented by the New York City physical director, created great interest. He maintained that

The gymnasium, properly directed, is an integral part of the fundamental four-fold purpose of the Association. Physically, the gymnasium should be a distinct department of our Association; morally, it should be conducted on the purest principles of the Association; intellectually, it should be made educational; spiritually, it should be a place where active and associate members meet and where Christian influence prevails (1887, p. 53).

The coming of Dr. Gulick to the International Committee staff as national leader of this interest, and also to the newly developed "School for Christian Workers" at Springfield, Mass., to create a specialized

TABLE X  
ASSOCIATIONS REPORTING PHYSICAL WORK TO 1900

YEAR	GYMNASIUMS REPORTED	PHYSICAL DIRECTORS REPORTED
1866.....	None	None
1876.....	2	3
1886.....	101	35
1896.....	495	220
1900.....	507	272

training program, ensured a wise and prophetic interpretation of this pioneer ministry to the physical and moral well-being of American youth. Before the convention of 1889, Dr. Gulick traced three distinct eras of physical education:

During the first, the aim was to excel in gymnastic feats, simply in order to excel—to develop a sixteen-inch arm, simply for its own sake, so that it should become larger or stronger than any other arm. The second was far in advance of this, the aim being health and symmetry of the body for its own sake, and without reference to the rest of the man, and without reference to educating the capacities of the physique. Thus good bodies resulted, but poor men. During the third, a still further advance is being made. It is now the education of the physique with reference to the ultimate purpose of the whole man, body, mind, and soul (1889, pp. 101-103).

In his discussion, Dr. Gulick sought to show

that physical education is the education of the physical powers of man with reference to his functions as a whole;  
that through its relations to the other parts of man, it is more than simply physical;  
that our aim is broader than simply health of body;  
that we need it more than did our ancestors;  
that the methods of our new gymnastics are thoroughly scientific.

An independent Conference of Association Physical Directors was first held in 1892. Ten years later they organized their own permanent professional society. Intrigued by the possibility of re-adapting "athletics" to characteristic Y.M.C.A. aims, as had been done with gymnastics, the International Convention of 1895 authorized the formation of the Athletic League of North American Associations, which has since under various names sought to guide competitive relations in keeping with the basic aims of the Association.

When, in 1900, 466 Associations reported physical department programs, with 444 gymnasiums, 273 assigned physical directors, and 72,443 male participants, it was evident that a marked modification of the Association's aim and service had taken place over the preceding thirty years. Probably no other single feature so largely affected the philosophy of personality that became central in the Association. The nature of the local organizational structure was affected, and the character of buildings. From it, also, however imperfectly, the public largely formed its understanding and its expectation of the Association.

## 2. *Educational*

It has been pointed out that the Boston Association in 1851 inserted the word "mental" in its statement of purpose, in supplement to the "spiritual" object of the London statement; and that the New York Association kept both of these and added two others: "social" and "physical." All of the early Associations followed the London example, however, in providing reading rooms and collecting libraries. Among the earliest of the latter were Boston (1851), New York (1852), San Francisco and Providence (1853), Brooklyn and Philadelphia (1854), Harrisburg and Richmond (1855). These were not entirely novel in this country, however, but followed already well established patterns of informal educational effort outside school auspices that a number of different young men's organizations had begun to carry on some years earlier (104).

In the 1867 Convention for the first time were discussed "Literary Classes, their management, and relations to the Associations." At the beginning these classes had been thought of largely as introductory to the evangelistic purposes then so prominent. It remained for Elihu Root, a young delegate from New York City, to voice clearly in the debate the desirable objective of conducting such classes for their own intrinsic value in training the mind. He

deprecated the introduction of religious motives as such into the literary class. This was not a place nor a time intended for the work of converting young men, but for improving their minds in literary matters. The distinctive aims of the various departments of the Association should not be confounded, and the good that the literary classes intended to secure should not be mistaken for another good or hindered by a false estimate (1867, p. 95).

The full bearing of this point of view did not become fully apparent for a number of years, but the growing practice of considering such classes as "secular" features reveals the deepening cleavage between the accepted conception of evangelistic religious activity and the varied means of influence they sought to justify by the same final test. Nevertheless in repeated attempts to curb the sale of pernicious literature in the cities and upon the trains, and to give support to the best elements of the press, the Associations expressed their interest on the side of education through a wholesome literature. The demand for organizing a lecture service resulted in a few organized seasons always, however, with the condition that the lecturers be sponsored who were at least friendly to Protestant evangelical thought.

It was therefore of considerable moment when the case for intellectual open-mindedness and liberal thought was vigorously proclaimed at the 1871 Convention. Discussing "Secular Instruction, What place shall it have in the work of our Associations?" one speaker made the following bold summary—in effect a statement of policy:

We deduce the conclusion that Christian men and Christian Associations should take a firm hold of the science and literature of the time, and use it in the highest degree and to the highest purpose. This argument is strengthened by the obvious facts, that want of culture, and of elevating tastes, is one of the most fertile causes of vice; and that when good men withdraw themselves from the secular progress of the age, it often falls into the power of those who destroy or pervert it (1871, p. 52).

In the same Convention spoke out President Mark Hopkins, of Williams College, on "Modern Skepticism in its relations to young men—How shall it be met by our Associations?" summarizing his challenge as follows:

In dealing with skepticism, we are first, not to fear it; it has strength, but there is something stronger; second, we are to discriminate inferences from facts; third, to accept all truth, and every honest doubt; and fourth, to be ourselves capable of that living faith which we would produce in others (1871, p. 64).

It may be questioned whether the intellectual quality implied by these utterances pervaded the strictly educational activities of the Associations in these decades. The influences of the libraries and the classes turned rather to the immediate interests of young men who were striving to make good in the swiftly developing, highly competitive, business life around them.

In 1881, an extended article in *Harper's Magazine* told of the 478 Associations then existing reporting libraries aggregating 164,188 volumes. Of these 139 Associations gave a value of \$227,268 to their libraries. Two hundred Associations had reading rooms, with an aggregate average daily attendance of 9,145.

The use of these books in a library of 10,000 volumes for the year 1874 showed the following: History, 11.5%; biography, 4.0%; travel and geography, 3.5%; Bibles and biblical works, 6.0%; theology, 3.5%; arts and science, 17.0%.

In no case are these collections of books mere libraries. They do not stand alone, but are part of a complex machinery, all of which has a unity of design in seeking, largely by the personal effort of individuals, the elevation and best welfare of the young men of the community (118).

TABLE XI  
GROWTH OF CERTAIN EDUCATIONAL FEATURES 1866—1900\*

ITEMS	1866	1876	1886	1896	1900
Volumes in Libraries.....	34,577	175,288	272,024	479,563	523,215
Libraries.....	28	247	366	670**	682†
Reading Rooms.....	††	304	444	799	775
Associations Reporting Lectures.	14	††	275	761	636
Associations Reporting Educational Classes.....	4	41	176	355	330
Different Students in Classes..	††	††	13,945‡	25,886	26,906
Literary Societies.....	††	††	118	187	

\*117, 1901.

\*\*Collections of 50 volumes or more.

†Collections of 50 volumes or more, except student Associations.

††Not reported in this year.

‡Data are for the year 1888, when first available.

Substantial as was the growth in both the number of libraries, volumes, lectures, and reading rooms during these years, the conduct of formal educational classes soon dominated the educational efforts of the local Association. The employment of a few local Associations in the early nineties of "local superintendents of educational departments" signified a development supported by many eminent educators of the day, who added their testimony in convention and otherwise. Finally, in 1895, with the particular backing of a well-established popular technical school, Pratt Institute of Brooklyn, a national staff executive was called to the service, Mr. George B. Hodge. As the data of Table XI show clearly, formal educational activities expanded greatly before the close of the century, forecasting still greater expansion.

Who were the participants in this novel leisure-time educational enterprise? The chairman of the Educational Committee of the Dayton Association, one of the foremost in interest, included the revealing analysis of Table XII in his presentation of this matter before the 1893 Convention (1893, p. 102).

That these activities were fairly typical of the demands of the day for educational activities may be assumed from a summary of "branches taught" provided by the 314 Associations in 1896. Seven Associations offered twenty or more "branches," while the Central Branch at Chicago

led with an offering of fifty-five subjects. By responding to these demands in departmental terms as a part of the fourfold program conception, the Association Movement again permitted a divergence between the symbolic unity of its triangle and the fourfold conception of personality that it seemed equally powerless to avoid or reconcile. By assuming the validity of a divided conception of personality, and developing programs intended to be effective for each component

TABLE XII  
ANALYSIS OF OCCUPATIONS REPRESENTED AND COURSES TAKEN BY 343 YOUNG MEN  
ENROLLED IN FORMAL EDUCATIONAL WORK OF DAYTON ASSOCIATION IN 1893

	OFFICE MEN	CLERKS	STUDENTS	GENERAL TRADES	SKILLED ME- CHANICS	TOTAL EN- ROLLED
Architectural Drawing.	1	3	1	2	7	14
Freehand Drawing....	3	3	6	7	7	26
Mechanical Drawing...	4	3	6	4	48	65
Carving.....	..	1	1	6	9	17
Modeling.....	2	..	2	..	12	16
Sub-total.....	10	10	16	19	83	138
Arithmetic.....	1	13	3	13	20	50
Bookkeeping.....	4	13	6	10	5	38
English.....	2	8	1	13	13	37
Penmanship.....	2	14	5	15	23	59
Elocution.....	6	4	7	3	1	21
Sub-total.....	15	52	22	54	62	205
Grand total.....	25	62	38	73	145	343

aspect, they unwittingly allowed themselves to fall into the error of assuming that morality itself could be understood as a distinct category co-ordinate with others, and that religion, though deemed pre-eminent, could still be symbolized as a co-ordinate part, or served effectively only through those activities designated as sacred.

### 3. Social-Economic

Economic emphasis, as such, although implicit in all of the contacts and relationships of the Associations, never attained a co-ordinate relation with the physical, intellectual, social, and spiritual aspects of the fourfold program philosophy. There was abundant reason why it might have been otherwise. Interest from the beginning in job status and career advancement, and at certain times in rates of pay and relationships of members as workers, might easily have become a primary concern, had the Movement found it possible to keep its departmental

emphasis unified around the realistic problems of young men. For example, locating positions for young men became an active feature of the program of hundreds of Associations. As shown in Table XIII, many thousands of positions were secured annually.

The motive of helping young men to improve their earning power has been noted in the extensive development of the educational activities. Some reference has been made earlier, also, to the concern of Associations for destitute young men, to the specialized services of a few designated branches, and to emergency relief assistance. Those who saw any religious value in such assistance or in related "secular" services, however, were a minority.

TABLE XIII  
EMPLOYMENT SERVICES REPORTED TO 1900

YEAR	ASSOCIATIONS HAVING EMPLOYMENT SERVICES	"SITUATIONS" REPORTED FILLED
1866.....	Not reported	Not reported
1876.....	771	9,502
1886.....	175	9,621
1896.....	345	9,460
1900.....	367	14,365

The social-economic emphasis became a *social* emphasis, taking its lesser place in the fourfold program. The social department was stressed, in the *Handbook* of 1891, along with the information and relief departments, with boarding-house bureau, savings bureau, a mutual benefit (conducted by a few Associations), sick visitation, and employment bureau. The social department was concerned with promoting "mutual intercourse" as contrasted with the individual services deemed characteristic of the other departments.

One may wonder why these young Association leaders did not grapple more readily with the total social situation surrounding the young man at work in his community. To be sure, these were years when modern social science was still very young. Understanding of the full implication of the rapid process of industrialization would have required rather deep insight. This was something beyond the ability of most laymen and also of the recently designated and often untrained professional leaders. Moreover, habits of sectored thinking, accompanied by departmental forms of organization and methods of service, made "simplification" easy. Complex problem areas were thus resolved into single aspects and dealt with separately.

Here and there a voice was raised in question or challenge, such as that of Professor Graham Taylor, of Chicago Commons, who addressed the 1895 Convention on "The Relations of the Young Men's Christian Associations to the Social-Economic Questions of the Day" (1895, p. 119). He spoke significantly of the manner in which the Young Men's Chris-

tian Association had established itself at the center of the cities. He gave, from government, police, and other reports, startling facts about the social disintegration going on in these central city communities. He enumerated many agencies among the "forces lining up against the frontiers of these lapsed regions"—secular organizations, fraternal orders, schools, clubs, trade unions, charity societies, settlements, and a few churches. He insisted that the Y.M.C.A. "has come to its Kingdom" to do such things as the following, in addition to what it was already doing:

To make of ourselves and our buildings centers for the social unification of the mixed and disunited hosts of young men, especially in the downtown wards of our cities;

To make some of our meetings and educational classes schools in which the young men of the nation may study and learn their social and civic rights and duties as a part of their citizenship and religion;

To raise up an intelligent body of young men who will know too much to take partisan sides, who will be too loyal to the commonwealth both of country and of the Kingdom of God to engage in the fratricidal strife of class warfare;

To push the Association Movement into the lodging houses and labor unions and street life and recreative rendezvous of young men.

So [held Dr. Taylor] only by taking a stand in between the divisive lines of caste and class and partisanship; by leading into the middle of the road; by making our buildings "common ground" for all and of ourselves middlemen—so only can we fulfill our supreme duty and opportunity in the "present crisis" to become "peacemakers" and leaders of our common Christianity in saving the soul and the social relations of America's young manhood.

But strong forces intervened. Mr. Cephas Brainerd, who three years earlier had rounded out twenty-five years of service as the devoted chairman of the International Committee, immediately arose and spoke, in part, as follows (1895, p. 126):

There does not seem to be anything in the present conditions to justify the Associations in going beyond the limits of the well-defined work in which they are now engaged. The present favorable position of the Association is due to many years of faithful work on the lines which they are now pursuing; and that position has not been secured without many severe struggles and in the face of much opposition. The work by young men for young men, as now prosecuted, is evoking all the force and all the money which the Associations can command. . . . The propriety and extent of the services of the Associations upon these well-defined lines cannot be questioned; the limit is simply to be found in the resources of the Associations; but as rapidly as possible they should, by their numerous and rapidly increasing branches, reach all classes of young men, the artisan and laborer included.

Mr. Brainerd commended the division of labor in England as between the Associations and settlement houses by which there is assigned "to every institution its particular form of service."

Unquestionably in the scheme of construction and education which the Associations seek to prosecute, they should, as far as possible, see to it that there be proper teaching upon the so-called topics of social economics; but here the utmost caution and prudence is required. There is great danger that incompetent men take up these topics and leave impressions quite erroneous upon young men. The Associations have as yet no matured experience in this class of instruction. There is no occasion for haste.

The breadth and scope of this question is well illustrated by the twelve topics proposed for consideration by Professor Taylor in *The Young Men's Era*, viz:

The Country Town; The City Center; Immigration; Industrial Life; The Sunday Rest and the Working Day; Poverty; Crime; The Liquor Power; The Social Vice; Luxury; The Local Church; Christian Co-operation.

The American Federation of Labor . . . proposed in 1894 eleven topics:

Compulsory education; direct legislation; a legal eight-hour day; sanitary inspection of workshop, mine, and home; liability of employer for injury to health, body or life; the abolition of the contract system in all public work; the abolition of the sweating system; the municipal ownership of street cars, and gas and electric plants for public distribution of light, heat and power; the nationalization of telegraphs, telephones, railroads and mines; the collective ownership by the people of all means of production and distribution; the principle of referendum in all legislation.

These topics are all, to a greater or less extent, but all to some extent, within the range of the so-called subject of social economics. No mere apprentice can treat of them advantageously to the young men who are attendant upon the Associations; nor can any one book, even the latest, in the hands of the average instructor furnish the material for a satisfactory and safe discussion of all or any one of these topics. The printed discussions, more or less valuable, constitute a library.

It is hardly wise for the Associations to employ as a teacher upon these complicated subjects—as to which agitation is sometimes thought to threaten the stability of the Government—men who are not even masters of the primers which treat of them, or men who, according to the best Association judgment, are not capable of taking the broadest Christian view of the subjects involved.

The Convention that heard this remarkable debate, so revealing of

the later course of the Young Men's Christian Association, also considered and laid advance plans around the following topics:

- "The Bible and its Supreme Importance for Young Men"
- "The Relation for the Association to the Foreign Mission Cause"
- "Christian Work in the Army"

and considered the means of raising a permanent fund for the endowment of the work of the International Committee. The course, in respect of social-economic policy, was apparently set.

It should be noted that the proposals of Professor Taylor, although including a strong challenge based on social conditions of cities, also recommended working through resident, building-centered effort—i.e., the social settlement method; and a policy of "not taking sides," which became known as the "middle-of-the-road policy." His suggestion was thus definitely institutional both in method and doctrine. It was met by an equally institutionalized rejoinder: namely, by not "going beyond the limits of the well-defined work in which they [the Associations] are engaged," "the propriety and extent" of which "upon these well-defined lines cannot be questioned." Brainerd also proposed an institutional "division of labor" which assigned spheres of activity without estimating the inevitable narrowing of interest or of recognized obligation which such divided responsibility carried with it. This was believed justified if, as Mr. Brainerd said, "they had the same general end in view." Did they so view the desired end? The topics later introduced by Mr. Brainerd leave doubt at this point. The doubt must have been widely justified, for the "social" aspect of the now firmly established fourfold concept definitely limited itself to conventional fellowship, and services that remained rather far removed from the social implications of the Taylor proposal (p. 267).

#### 4. *Religious*

The original impetus to the organization of American Y.M.C.A.'s had been intensely religious. The elements of ardent belief in a personal God, the deep sense of need for individual redemption from the burden of sin, the conception of Jesus as Christ and Savior, the obligation of the believing to win others to this belief, were all present. In the American Associations, in contrast with those in England, by making Protestant church membership status a requirement for active membership in local Associations tended to confuse such status with the vital Christian experience believed to accompany true conversion. Once members were accepted in terms of church status, their credentials for active Association leadership were established primarily by the record rather than by witness or conduct. And yet the resulting constituency, despite much diversity of origin and credential, exhibited considerable common religious outlook.

Official reiterations of the Protestant church identification, in the Conventions of 1868 and 1869, sought to guarantee right thinking and religious vitality on the part of leaders of local Associations and their chosen representatives. By the former, at least, it was intended that the constant local program choices that must be made in every Association would be such as would undergird and fulfill the religious aim implicit in current Protestant belief.

In the first few years following actions referred to above, questions such as the following recurred each year for serious discussion in annual Convention:

- “What is the true aim of the Associations, and their primary field of labor?”
- “What is the best mode of conducting Association Bible classes?”
- “The relation between the Association and the Church of Christ.”
- “How can we best reach that large class of young men outside of religious influence?”
- “How can the Association best be kept steadfast in the promotion of practical piety among converted young men, and in the effort for the salvation of the unconverted within reach?”
- “Lay preaching—is it desirable that Associations should undertake it?”
- “Personal consecration to Christ essential to real success in Association work in its grandest phase, the conversion of young men.”

Against this background of thought the local activities that developed were centered largely around a few recognized items forming the basis of work reported by local Associations for many years:

- Sermons to young men
- Prayer meetings at rooms
- Bible classes, and average attendance
- Other religious meetings
- Day of Prayer observance

The Bible-study emphasis increased in prominence. There was increasing discussion of informal methods (e.g., the “conversational”) and of the use of the Bible both as a means of conversion and of instruction and training of Christian workers. Here the predominantly lay character of the Associations should be kept in mind. Such Bible coaching should be understood in its relation to an emerging lay force, primarily Protestant in character and outlook, believed competent to interpret the essentials of Christian belief and to guide the new inquirer into vital belief.

While the Bible-study emphasis was proceeding thus vigorously, religious meetings for young men were being chiefly relied upon as a method for achieving the religious objectives of the Associations. With each decade, as Table XIV shows, with the growth in number of Asso-

ciations, these forms of religious activity became more nearly general. In 1886 and for some years thereafter, the Associations reported in much detail on the kinds of religious meetings held, differentiating those held exclusively for young men.

*Types of Religious Meetings Reported in 1866:*

*Not exclusively for young men:* Alms house; Bible class; Cottage prayer meetings; Daily meeting; Gospel meeting; Hospital; Jail; Open air; Prayer and praise; Song services; Temperance; Sunday school; Sunday school teachers.

*Exclusively for young men:* Daily; Gospel; Prayer meeting; Service of song; Training class.

In this year, 354 Associations reported 368 prayer meetings regularly held for young men exclusively, 286 of which had a total average

TABLE XIV  
ASSOCIATIONS REPORTING RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES TO 1900

ASSOCIATIONS REPORTING	1866	1876	1886	1896	1900
Bible Classes or Leader Training.....	13	77	418	762	842
Young Men's Religious Meetings.....	47	437	703	1,070	1,128
Total Associations Listed in These Years.....	90	982	1,066	1,448	1,476

attendance of 6,408. Thousands of young men were reported in each of the foregoing apparently similar features. It was evidently an age of meetings. It was not for want of patronage, therefore, that the more diversified program approach to young men was introduced, under the designation "secular," to remain permanently in the program and to seek constantly to justify its aims and methods as "religious."

The sacred-secular contrast, as commonly conceived, rested upon a false philosophy of values, and a mistaken view that personality is essentially dualistic. This latter arose from the incomplete insights of the pre-psychological age, when educational pioneers stressing the unity of personality spoke largely in vain, and when the formal methods of organized religion largely failed to recognize the social nature and conditioning of individual belief.

Thus the physical emphasis, the educational program, and even the social-economic proposal, had not only to prove the intrinsic worth of their contribution, but their authentic right as religious means (p. 237). Strong voices were raised on their behalf, but this result was never wholly achieved. Culick sought to do this when, in pleading for "the new gymnastics" in 1889, he said:

From a scientific standpoint, the Associations have a very valuable

foundation for their work in the fact that they are working for *young men*; not simply for their bodies, minds and souls, but for the salvation, development, and training of the whole man complete as God made him. While we recognize of course that the intellectual is far more valuable than the physical, and that the spiritual is infinitely of more value than both, still we see the fundamental necessity of all three, and work for the development of man as a whole (1889, p. 100).

Through these appeals, however inadequate, however partially understood and accepted, it was inevitable that some modification of the original aims of the Association should take place. The sense of directness that characterized the felt obligation of one young man to appeal without delay to another young man of his own age to become a Christian was substantially affected by a changed point of view regarding (1) the best method of access, (2) the wisest preparatory approach, and (3) allowance of necessary time for processes to work.

Rooms, events, gymnasiums were multiplied to increase and make a natural access to the young man to be reached. Training and coaching were applied to those actively interested in recruiting others to Christian profession and affiliation. Time was required to permit a process of education to lead to self-discovery and to allow the strong feeling of group bond and purpose to assert itself naturally. The intrinsic and instrumental values in these relationships could not be easily distinguished from one another. The former did not need to be identified and labeled to be valid; the latter could not be guaranteed as valid even when so identified and labeled. The conception of religious obligation and religious method necessarily broadened (p. 235).

As a result of these modifications of religious aim, through program diversification, two types of problems resulted that have continued long after:

(a) *The Difficulty with any Criterion for Religious Living among Young Men Based on a Formal Relationship to the Church.* This problem may be illustrated from an analysis of the church attitude and participation of 3,838 members of Chicago Central Y.M.C.A. in 1900. The analysis showed how membership, attendance, and preference were related as between evangelical and non-evangelical church groups (102). More than one-half of this body of 3,838 members were without church relationship, and almost one-third reported neither attendance nor preference. The non-evangelical church members were almost one-third the number of evangelical church members, though a lesser proportion of those leaning toward evangelical affiliation as judged by attendance or preference. This probably not untypical situation represented a problem that had become general. Did a realistic and valid religious service to these thousands of young men mean insistent pressure on each member to join a Protestant church? Though Associations would never admit to waiving this latter object, it seems clear that they

gradually became convinced of the intrinsic value of the diversified programs. These they carried on almost independently of whether they added young men to the Protestant church. As a result such an aim was often a hope deferred, and sometimes ceased longer to be a hope at all.

(b) *The Difficulty with any Criterion for Vital Organization Relationship with the Churches Based upon a Formal Classification of Members.* The declared policy of the International Convention recognizing only those Associations that limited their active membership to members of evangelical churches, had long had a remarkable degree of acceptance. By its terms, a local Association might proceed with its work with little difficulty. By distinguishing between active and associate members, and limiting office-holders and voting rights to the former, there were few protests from non-evangelical or non-church minorities. These generally conceded such privileges readily. Few members found the voting privilege of much interest or concern. As the Associations became strong and powerful, very few of them sought to secure or preserve much direct member participation in policy-making or control. The continuing official lay group, always older, could be, or had to be, trusted. Most members had more direct individual interest in activities offered. Many of them were transient in their connection. In his address in 1895, Taylor had stressed that some Associations were losing 66 per cent of their members each twelve months, and that in Chicago "the very whereabouts of fully 40 per cent cannot be discovered" (1895, p. 122).

In the study previously quoted, the specific denominational relationships of the 3,838 members were analyzed. The chief Protestant groups were substantially represented, but the number of Roman Catholic members exceeded any other single denominational group. The Jewish group was also substantial. Attendance and preference distributions showed a lack of stable relation between denominational connection and interest. The very diversity of the composition of the membership introduced factors and practical problems of program management quite different than those assumed in the basis for Association recognition policy adopted in 1869. What immediate bond could be formed between the local churches as such and the local Association, or between the denominations taken singly or together and the now powerful Association Movement?

These questions were not wholly met or dissipated by the prevalent church sympathy of Association leaders, nor the arrangements for co-operation and contact that sprang up in every community. Many ministers found the activity of the Associations a substantial support for their own work, and gave unstinted backing in return. The more institutionally minded churchmen, however, were reluctant to concede the value of practical programs not connected with divine offices. The Associations avoided ceremonial or ritual observances; they did not attempt to conduct services of church worship. Even when some churches

themselves copied the Association's varied methods in what they came to term "institutional churches," there remained some tendency toward competition. No organic solution to the confused relationship emerged.

To many, however, the experience of working together toward important objectives, regardless of denominational and theological differences, seemed to justify the broad religious policy of the Y.M.C.A. in relation to church effort. It brought intimacy and conviction to relationships otherwise formal. Dr. Taylor, already quoted, compared the Y.M.C.A. with the Evangelical Alliance, which had done much to bring Protestant churches into relationship, in the following terms:

In associating young men together you only began the associative progress which was to broaden until you have given the Church the only widely-recognized interdenominational representative of common Christianity constantly at work on the world field. I do not forget the Evangelical Alliance, but the Alliance is as yet more of a spirit or an ideal than an actualized form of everyday work. It is a sort of fluid organization and goes into precipitation around a convention or a deliverance, and then goes into solution again. We need that sort of thing, and more, the organized co-operative Christian unity which it is bringing about. You will not, I hope, suspect me of making any disparaging comparison whatever. By your own already well-established centers you are furnishing a common ground for the co-operative effort of common Christianity for the common humanity, on the city, home, and foreign fields. It is a superb and splendid mission (1895, p. 121).

This confidence was widely shared. The opportunity it suggested, and the problems of church relationship therein implied, continued to shape the religious emphasis of the Y.M.C.A.'s well into the coming century.

##### *5. The Building Movement as an Expression of Program Trends*

The Y.M.C.A. building movement between the Civil War and 1900 was an example of adaptation to unfamiliar program needs. It was made without guiding patterns, adequate technical experience, clear foresight of the volume to which it would attain, or the great influence it would ultimately exert. The sheer dimension of this development can be shown more clearly only by showing year by year the number of units listed, those newly erected, and additions built. (See Table XV.) A total of 386 units were acquired (to 1898), of which 239, or 61.9 per cent, were newly erected. These cost just 80.0 per cent of a total valuation exceeding 16 million dollars.

This earliest building program (to be followed by at least two others after 1900) resulted in the acquisition of large property interests that in themselves greatly affected the relatively simple organizational problems of earlier years. Its beginning, however, arose simply from the fact that the meager accommodations of the Association "rooms"

were no longer adequate. An early meeting hall opened in Baltimore in 1859 and the Farwell Hall opened in Chicago in 1867 represented the earliest conceptions of building needs. A survey of social condi-

TABLE XV

NUMBER AND VALUE OF BUILDINGS (AND BUILDING UNITS) ACQUIRED AND ERECTED BY Y.M.C.A.'S FROM 1867 TO 1898 INCLUSIVE

YEAR	ALL UNITS		UNITS ERECTED		WINGS ADDED		GMN. ADDITIONS	
	NO.	VALUE	NO.	VALUE	NO.	VALUE	NO.	VALUE
1867...	1	\$190,000	1	\$190,000	..	.....	..	.....
1868...	1	35,000	1	35,000	..	.....	..	.....
1869...	3	688,375	3	688,375	..	.....	..	.....
1870...	..	.....	..	.....	..	.....	..	.....
1871...	4	70,500	1	10,000	..	.....	..	.....
1872...	2	62,500	1	14,000	..	.....	..	.....
1873...	5	330,200	2	107,000	1	\$49,000	..	.....
1874...	4	239,100	3	199,100	..	.....	..	.....
1875...	3	54,500	2	29,500	1	25,000	..	.....
1876...	1	496,000	1	496,000	..	.....	..	.....
1877...	5	373,500	4	101,023	..	.....	..	.....
1878...	3	21,000	2	15,000	1	14,000	..	.....
1879...	2	28,000	1	20,000	..	.....	..	.....
1880...	4	101,023	3	63,523	..	.....	..	.....
1881...	6	169,864	3	77,364	..	.....	..	.....
1882...	7	125,900	3	50,000	..	.....	1	\$14,000
1883...	6	353,823	3	304,550	..	.....	..	.....
1884...	11	293,480	5	209,780	1	18,500	3	33,280
1885...	11	325,300	9	265,500	..	.....	2	14,500
1886...	14	200,325	9	165,825	1	20,000	1	5,480
1887...	25	1,075,210	18	974,610	5	368,600	5	144,450
1888...	20	568,903	14	505,833	2	38,800	1	22,000
1889...	39	1,128,965	25	962,615	3	159,300	2	34,000
1890...	25	767,550	9	221,300	4	71,500	2	27,750
1891...	35	1,417,150	25	1,305,816	1	16,500	4	311,500
1892...	27	1,207,200	20	1,109,850	1	6,000	1	9,850
1893...	30	1,034,500	19	812,300	5	93,900	2	270,000
1894...	24	1,190,900	15	924,900	2	95,000	2	89,400
1895...	22	588,625	10	470,625	2	62,500	1	6,000
1896...	20	1,186,943	11	975,518	3	123,000	1	1,525
1897...	18	594,600	11	503,800	2	58,200	1	25,000
1898...	8	1,733,280	6	1,693,280	..	.....	..	.....
Total Units...	386	239		35		29		
Total Value...	\$16,652,216		\$13,466,977		\$1,219,800		\$1,008,538	

tions among young men in New York City about 1865, already referred to, revealed that a much more adaptable equipment would be desirable. The New York Association opened in 1869 a four-story building costing \$487,000. The influence of this "first modern building" was very great, and Associations far and near laid plans to follow the New York example.

During these years the Associations found that the attempt to rent satisfactory accommodations was usually futile. The objections to renting quarters were summarized in the 1883 Convention (1883, p. 123):

- (a) Difficulty in finding well-located, bright, healthy, suitable rooms.
- (b) The cost of such rooms when found.
- (c) The trouble, expense, and sometimes impossibility of making such changes as the increasing needs of a growing Association demand.
- (d) The uncertainty of tenancy.
- (e) Possibility of temporary financial difficulties or other troubles causing loss of income, the giving up of rooms, and possible death of the Association.

In contrast, favorable results from the Association's owning its home were considered to be:

Adaptation—ensuring rooms planned for and suited to the work;  
Permanency—securing confidence, respect, and support;  
Publicity—showing the magnitude and importance of the work.

From such values, it was felt that the following results would naturally be expected:

- (a) A greatly increased attendance at the rooms and at the meetings, and a consequent increase of membership.
- (b) A better class of young men will become interested in the work, and a more influential class will aid its support.
- (c) A larger contribution and more of them.
- (d) A work more fruitful of results, being done with better facilities and better men.
- (e) A home feeling engendered which knits the active membership strongly together, removes strangeness and constraint in both social and religious effort, and establishes the Associations in the affections of the people.

On the whole, the record of the years showed that each of these expectations was realized. Each year gave testimony that the buildings met a real need and were very popular.

Mr. I. E. Brown, State Secretary of Illinois, took initiative in preparing a manual of buildings, which appeared in successive editions in 1885, 1886 and 1887. In this booklet were presented engravings of many of the newly built structures, reflecting the external architecture of the day. Prominent in these early buildings, with a few exceptions, were the large meeting hall, the stores along the street for income from rentals, the ample foyer or parlors, and a rather primitive gymnasium of limited space. There were no patterns to follow in planning these

buildings, and both local committees and architects were without experience. Their plans were also included in the manuals and some information about costs, and the distribution of gifts that made their erection possible. From these notes, the following examples are taken:

1869 New York City. \$487,000 701 contributors: 1 @ \$75,747; 1 @ \$27,000; 1 @ \$20,400; 2 @ \$20,000; 1 @ \$15,000; 6 @ \$10,000; 1 @ \$8,000; 1 @ \$7,500; 1 @ \$7,021; 1 @ \$7,000; 2 @ \$6,000; 1 @ \$5,500; 1 @ \$5,380; 1 @ \$5,250; 10 @ \$5,000; 3 @ \$4,000; 2 @ \$3,000; 6 @ \$2,500; 10 @ \$2,000; 3 @ \$1,500; 2 @ \$1,400; 2 @ \$1,250; 2 @ \$1,200; 35 @ \$1,000; and 605 @ less than \$1,000.

1877 Meriden, Conn. \$38,000 304 contributions: 2 @ more than \$2,000; 4 @ \$2,000 to \$1,000; 10 @ \$1,000 to \$500; 58 @ \$500 to \$100; and 230 @ \$100 to \$25.

1884 Pittsburgh, Pa. \$100,000 373 contributors: 1 @ \$30,000; 1 @ \$3,000; 2 @ \$2,500; 10 @ \$1,750 to \$1,025; 11 @ \$1,000; 7 @ \$600 to \$525; 20 @ \$500; 42 @ \$450 to \$125; 54 @ \$100; and 225 @ less than \$100.

1885 Berwick, Pa. \$17,500 79 contributors: 1 @ \$5,000; 1 @ \$3,695; 3 together \$1,000; 6 @ \$100; 68 @ less than \$100.

1885 Milwaukee, Wis. \$65,000 1,000 contributors: 1 @ \$6,800; 1 @ \$5,000; 1 @ \$3,500; 1 @ \$3,000; and 700 @ less than \$100 each.

1886 Springfield, Ill. \$38,000 120 contributors: 9 @ \$1,000; 7 @ \$500; 11 @ \$250; 3 @ \$200; 4 @ \$150; 12 @ \$100; and 75 @ less than \$100.

In 1895, Mr. Brown published a further formidable volume, again with copious engravings and plans, this time adding his own "Brief History of the Building Movement" in which he stated:

In the early history of the Movement there was no distinct style of building which would be called an *Association style*. To a very large extent, the principal idea was to secure a large hall. An old church was now and then made to do duty, and was thought to be well fitted to the work because of its large audience room. This idea has been gradually outgrown and the *home* idea has taken the place of the *hall* idea, the effort now being to make our buildings as homelike as possible for the homeless young man. With the constant development of our work, too, it has become imperative to provide for many lines of activity under the Association roof.

. . . There has not been simply the adding of room to room. There has been a gradual development of an Association type of building, with its central reception room as the key to the whole, from which all the different departments and rooms of the building are readily reached (83). }

**Commenting on the problems of costs and maintenance, which**

steadily became more difficult, Mr. Brown revealed the thought of his day when he stressed the desirability of renting store space and even offices in preference to providing dormitory rooms. This latter feature was to become outstanding in later buildings. The whole idea of the dormitory and residence as a program emphasis was not yet in sight.

Vast sums of money were thus being spent with earnest but inadequate technical study. The buildings were being adapted to new demands as these became apparent and funds became available. One thing appeared certain: the confidence which the American community,

TABLE XVI

## SUMMARY OF BUILDINGS AND OTHER REAL ESTATE, ENDOWMENT FUNDS, ETC., IN 1900

359 buildings are reported valued at .....	\$20,378,480
226 buildings have debts amounting to.....	4,337,715
96 Associations report other real estate owned valued at.....	1,241,750
28 Associations report debts on same amounting to.....	223,905
77 Associations report building funds paid in.....	370,320
87 Associations report building funds pledged.....	1,020,880
48 Associations report endowment funds paid in.....	732,940
3 Associations report endowment funds pledged.....	33,540
13 Associations report library funds paid in.....	125,990
7 Associations report educational funds paid in.....	100,810
3 Associations report other special funds paid in.....	36,265
1 Association reports other special funds pledged .....	2,000
26 buildings appeared in this Table for the first time, making a net increase in number of buildings of 15	
65 buildings are occupied by departments: colored, 2; student, 18; railroad, 45	

or certain elements of it, had come to have in the Young Men's Christian Association, and their resulting willingness to give most generously to provide the facilities with which to further its work.

The 1900 *Year Book* carried a revealing summary of building information, special funds, and other related data of interest, as shown in Table XVI (117, 1900, p. 64).

The specter of debt clouded the new building values to perhaps 20 per cent. Building funds then pledged exceeded one million dollars. Substantial endowments had also been paid in or pledged. Among the 359 buildings here reported, were only 2 in colored Associations. There were 45 in railroad centers, and 18 in the colleges. The building pattern was likely to be applied nationally.

The process of raising these large funds must be noted. There was deep interest, and generosity, but little "campaign method" in the early efforts, though in the 1869 and 1870 Conventions there was some discussion of methods. By 1888, these undertakings had developed to a point where a "plan of canvass for a building" was published by the International Committee in pamphlet form. It dealt with committee organization, methods of approach, and records; and prepared the

way for more precise techniques to come. The *Handbook* of 1891, and its preceding editions, carried a chapter on "How to get a building," which began with the sensible keynote: "The Association must deserve a building." It also stated, in its broad outline of suggestions for preparation and canvass, that "a building fund may be started sometimes years in advance and serve not only as an educator, but as a sort of wedge, ready for the strong blow which shall finally accomplish the full purpose."

This conception was soon doomed to pass into discard. Around the raising of funds for these Association buildings was developed a method later termed the "short-term financial campaign," which was soon firmly established in the pattern of Y.M.C.A. procedure, and which later spread beyond it into American community financing projects. During the 1890's, this method was developed experimentally in certain American cities in connection with local Association finance and membership solicitation (115). Its marked success in Omaha, Nebraska, led to similar efforts in many cities, some thirty in 1896 and 1897 alone. In some cities, during these years, both building and debt campaigns had reached their goals in a few days. As the century turned, the repeated successes led to refinement of method and a confidence and expectation regarding money-raising that left few barriers in the way of an enormous further expansion of physical plant and property. That expansion was not long delayed (p. 255).

In this thirty-year adaptation from an informal Association in the late sixties to a building-centered and rigidly departmentalized program in 1900, the Association Movement had created a twofold structure from which it could probably never again depart. As its organization experience had been unique, so its buildings were unique—a growth closely correlated with its changing program experience, subject to its divergent tendencies. The building, symbolic though it was of a united ministry, could not ensure a unity its conception of character building and personality tended to deny. On the contrary, the differentiation of space that accompanied later buildings ministered to narrowed appreciations on the part of member and staff alike (p. 252).

## V. THE DEVELOPMENT OF LEADERS

The Young Men's Christian Association was during its first decades a Movement of younger Christian laymen embodying significant principles in the history of organized religious effort.

### 1. *The Lay Principle*

There was neither precedent for nor thought of any other than a direct participant relationship, in the early Associations, by the young men themselves both as regards what was done and its control. More-

over, the underlying philosophy of committee services, and the ready acceptance of such responsibility by thousands of young men, established a new function in the development of religious effort. Religion had tended toward highly institutional expression, with orders, authorities, rituals for worship, given to, not created by, the lay mind. Here in the experiences of independent lay committee groups, based on conviction and fellowship, religion became a lay function, not isolated from the discipline and patterns of churchly order, but operated freely with growing belief in its propriety and efficacy. This was an essentially non-institutional conception. In its present form, it was also a Protestant conception, although the Catholic lay orders flourished long before; and, as previously pointed out, there had been earlier instances of denominational lay organization (80 and 81).

The lay committee method was firmly believed in and stoutly advocated in all of the Conventions of the early Confederation before the Civil War. This did not mean lack of intimate relationship to the ministers of the churches, for there was much direct consultation and encouragement, as well as continued formal participation by some.

It was not only in the local community that such laymen functioned. Some of them conceived and brought into being the Confederation itself in 1854; handled extensive correspondence, planning, and visitation around the annual Conventions; discharged heavy interim assignments and responsibilities; and otherwise for almost fifteen years before, during and following the Civil War, performed all of the functions necessary for launching the Association Movement and guiding it safely through its early crucial decisions.

## 2. *The Secretarial Function*

However, the early Associations soon found limitations in such methods of work. When rooms and libraries were opened, their supervision and care required attention. As programs of meetings and classes were projected, there were many failures to carry through. There was more individual contact required than could be handled during hours free from business demands. Adaptation toward a function that would be at least interim and ancillary in character came of practical necessity. A few individuals were so assigned in the fifties, and by 1866 there were said to be twelve so employed. Some of these were designated as "missionaries" in their local communities, others as "librarians." John Wanamaker was for a short time so employed in Philadelphia, and considered himself as the first full-time secretary in the United States (153).

From these matter-of-fact beginnings, there came about by 1900 an elaboration of "secretarial" service almost bewildering in its variety and scope. Table XVII shows the variety of employed-secretarial relationships, the year in which the new function appeared, and the steady

TABLE XVII

## SECRETARIES REPORTED IN Y.M.C.A. SERVICE FROM 1873 TO 1900 FROM SECRETARIALISTS IN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORTS AND YEAR BOOKS

YEARS:	1873	1874	1875	1876	1877	1878	1879	1880	1881	1882	1883	1884	1885	1886	1887	1888	1889	1890	1891	1892	1893	1894	1895	1896	1897	1898	1899	1900
Diocesan (including Foreign).....	1	2	3	5	8	8	8	9	9	9	10	11	11	11	11	12	17	19	22	23	26	29	30	35	35	45	48	61
(Foreign Separated).....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Assistant International.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
State and Provincial.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
General Secretaries.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Assistant, Office, etc.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Finanical.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Baikrod.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Assistant Railroad.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
College.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
German.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Assistant German.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Espanish.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Assistant French.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Librarian.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Assistant Librarian.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Superintendent of Gymnasiums.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Assistant Super. of Gymnasiums.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Superintendent of Employment.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Superintendent of Membership.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Superintendent of Junior Dept.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Astt. Super. of Junior Dept.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Officer.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Assistant Officer.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Superintendent of Educational Dept.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Assistant Super. of Educational Dept.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
County.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
District.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Editor "Association Men".....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Training School.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Army and Navy.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Assistant Army and Navy.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Subscription for names counted twice.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total.....	63	77	98	108	114	141	178	210	257	341	388	383	487	623	762	809	977	1083	1140	1186	1141	1169	1248	1221	1211	1276	1309	

increase in the number of persons so employed. The data shown cover the period from 1873, when the first list of "general secretaries" was published with the annual Executive Committee Reports.

So marked a development in leadership necessarily affected both the character and direction of the Association Movement's development profoundly, and threatened the foundation premise of lay primacy, upon which the entire Movement rested. Four significant aspects may be noted:

- (a) The relative permanence of the secretarial function, necessitated by the sheer volume of the management and operation burden. In 1900, the 1,275 secretaries then employed ranged in service years from one to thirty; with a median of 5.8 years ( $Q^1$ —2.4 years;  $Q^3$ —9.8 years). One-tenth had served 14 years or longer. The number of secretaries had increased more rapidly than the number of Associations. Here was a new demand, growing with the growing movement and bidding fair to continue, which had already become a career function for some.
- (b) The employment of this increasing number of persons for specialized work necessarily involved substantial costs. These obligations were reflected in rapidly expanding local budgets. How would such costs be met? As the modern buildings multiplied, both direct operating costs and program costs increased. In both there were secretarial items. Could the Movement afford the secretaries? Who would determine?
- (c) The increase in number of secretaries was closely correlated with the extension of Association services to special groups, and the particularization of program emphases in the departments. These aspects have already been discussed. In each instance, there were enough factors of uniqueness or necessity to limit the feasibility of interchange of professional services between and within the special groups or departments. This was probably less because of unwillingness than preoccupation, although each type of specialization tended to develop unique methods, a special vernacular, and a point of view difficult to integrate fully with the whole. The predominant size of and investment in the city type of work may have led its employed staff to regard such work as the characteristic mode, and to assume its typical and unquestioned department structure as valid in any other setting. In any case, the Secretaryship itself began to exhibit signs of institutional tendency, and even groups within the secretarial body sometimes appeared to do so.
- (d) Under such conditions, lay primacy was itself threatened by the rise of the much diversified secretarial body to a quasi-competitive status. This, it was apparent, would require redefinition of the lay and professional functions, if the former were significantly to survive. Such redefinition was attempted at the 1887 Convention when a revered State Secretary, Mr.

I. E. Brown of Illinois (*151*), and an equally revered layman, Dr. Lucien C. Warner (*169*), a member of the International Committee, discussed the parallel topics:

“The Secretarial Element: Its Place and Power” (Mr. Brown)

“The Lay Element: Its Place and Power” (Dr. Warner)

Pointing out that the secretarial office had grown “without pedigree,” Mr. Brown dwelt on the large growth in responsibilities that had taken place in recent years, “all of these demanding the careful supervision of a single mind”; and maintained that “the office resembles in many respects that of the general manager of a railroad. Like that official, the general secretary is under a board; he is the executive officer of that board; he has the general direction of all departments; he organizes the working forces. But, unlike the general manager, he deals with volunteer workers, from whose ranks he came yesterday, and to which he may return tomorrow; and he deals with forces which are not material alone, but are largely spiritual. He needs to keep constantly in mind that his place is not that of the Association, or of its working forces, or of its board. His place is to make most effective the forces of the Association” (1887, p. 41).

Dr. Warner, on the other hand, held that

The Young Men’s Christian Association is essentially a company of laymen banded together to do Christian work. The central idea of the church is the preaching of the gospel by the minister; and the lay element finds its place largely in co-operating with the minister in his plans of work. With the Association, the lay element is predominant, and if a secretary is employed, he is to co-operate with the laymen in helping them to carry forward their work. . . . It is important, however, that there should be a proper division of work between the secretary and the Association, and that each should carry his or its own share of the burdens and responsibilities.

Objecting to the “officious guides” he had seen hurrying “personally conducted European excursions,” Dr. Warner said

So it is with the personally conducted Association. The secretary is the factotum, the all in all. He tells the directors what to vote, and they vote it. He tells committees what to do, and they do it, or leave it for him to do. The secretary is the Association. The individual talent of the members is not developed, but the Association is kept in leading strings. This plan may make the secretaries prominent men, but it does not make strong Associations. It does not accomplish large results in the community. (1887, pp. 42-43).

Such vigorous debate must have been rooted in experience and have reflected real tendencies. Others sought to stress that laymen and secretary “stand on the same level,” that neither should “be exalted,”

and that common Christian obligation of each should ensure effective collaboration. The problems here represented did not readily disappear. They required restatement and redefinition from year to year, and awaited fuller development of a professional technology that would concern itself with the release and application of lay devotion to the urgent problems of the youth of the community.

Meantime, problems arose in the requirements of the secretarial body itself. The early designations of "missionary" and "agent" gave way by 1873 to the wide-spread use of the term "general secretary" by which, when these were first presented in a published list, it was intended to designate "the officer of the Association who is salaried to give all or a specified portion of his time to the work of the society." Those specializing in gymnasium, employment, membership, and educational work were first not considered as "secretaries" of equal standing, but as "superintendents," presumably because their assignments were in the "secular" area.

Beyond such questions of designation, the importance of which lay chiefly in what it revealed of growing group self-consciousness and recognition, were the more urgent practical questions of standards, means of placement, and training.

To standards, qualifications, and the specific work of the general secretary, the Conventions of 1872 and 1873 devoted much attention. At that time, men of exemplary Christian life and ready social qualities were sought. Ten years later, the problem of finding a sufficient number of such men was still present, while "the work of securing and recommending young men for the general secretaryship" had itself come to demand Convention attention and administrative assignment. In 1883, the Secretarial Bureau was established; and it continued a necessary and appreciated selective service thereafter. But it could not, and did not, control the local choice of leadership, which remained a function of local lay boards, who undoubtedly made both wise and unwise choices. The task of the Secretarial Bureau was described, after a year's operation, as follows:

1. To investigate the qualifications of candidates suggested.
2. To recommend such as seem to have gifts in this direction.
3. To suggest to Associations seeking secretaries the names of men who appear most suitable for the places, and furnish at the same time such information as we have regarding them, that correspondence may be carried on intelligently between the two parties. The work is then advisory. The decisions are made by others.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Mr. Bowne, the first incumbent of this office, stated that during this first period 492 young men (an average of 18 per month) presented themselves as candidates for the secretaryship, or were suggested as likely to be useful in it and were communicated with. Of this number 161, or 37 per cent, found a place in the work, 54 through their own efforts or those of friends, and 107 through the suggestion of the committee

As the secretarial function and responsibility expanded, or became specialized, the need for training became only too obvious. Educators of standing supported the appeals for the establishment and maintenance of training provisions. The School for Christian Workers at Springfield, Massachusetts, opened in 1885 for a general Christian training program, was recognized as such a center, and became the first formal educational institution offering specific training for the Y.M.C.A. Secretaryship. This was in 1886. The offering of courses in the "new gymnastics" led to great interest in this departure, and a demand for short introductory courses, which were offered in the summer season. The advantages of summer assemblies for relaxation and religious study were also recognized, and such centers were opened at Silver Bay, New York, and Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. A specializing institution for training Y.M.C.A. leaders was also opened in 1890 at Chicago under the name "Y.M.C.A. Institute and Training School." The superior value of sound apprentice training for this work was recognized long in advance of the opening of special schools, and arrangements were first made among the secretaries themselves to designate the Washington, D. C., and later the Newburgh, New York, Associations for this purpose. A number of promising younger men were sent there for training on the job.

Formal group organization of the secretaries was a natural outgrowth of the practical problems faced in the local work. In 1871, in connection with the Washington International Convention, a small meeting was held at which eleven secretaries organized a "Secretaries' Association." In the early minutes of this new Association grouping, and in their discussions over many years, the practical problems were much to the fore. The subjects were similar to the Convention discussions, where laymen also participated; but in addition they included questions around salary, training, etc. (166). Such discussions arose from and served to heighten the sense of group interest, and perhaps further distinguished the essentially different character of the volunteer as against the employed worker. One item that was to prove a continual bond of common interest between layman and secretary was naïvely conceived by the second secretarial conference in 1873 where, among other pronouncements, the following declaration was made: "The secretary should have as little as possible to do with the finances of the Association."

Reminding the delegates at the 1885 International convention that "the Young Men's Christian Association is a lay work and can never be successfully dominated by its executive officers," H. Thane Miller, a layman, bade all secretaries, local, state, and international

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182, or 42 per cent, were dropped after a thorough investigation, with 89 still standing upon the register, some of whom have been suggested to places, while others might be if they would take a course of preparation.—From a report for 1884-5, by J. T. Bowne, included in the Executive Committee Report for that year.

ever to remember their subordination to the organizations they represent. Any attempt to assume authority, or to manifest a spirit of dictation, will cause each officer to discover that any such fancied authority is thinner than a gossamer web (1885, p. 63).

This admonition was given in the course of discussion of a surprising topic: "Association Secretaries, their Relation to One Another, and the Spirit that should actuate them." The speaker added

"A dictatorial spirit, unkindly criticism, and every form of petty jealousy, should be foreign to *all* secretaries. . . . There are many opportunities for friction between them. As our secretaries are growing in numbers, the opportunities for such friction multiply. As wise men, the secretaries of this blessed growing work for young men should feel the need of a growing forbearance, consideration, sympathy, and brotherliness for one another."

The close of the century bequeathed many unsolved Association problems to the period to follow, among them, the refinement and maturing of the secretarial function.

### *3. Laymanship, Membership, and the Secretaryship*

The distinguished laymen who cherished the maintenance of lay primacy in the Y.M.C.A. were seeking more than the survival of a tradition. As they experienced it and understood it, the lay function was a manifestation of the democratic principle in the field of religious values. To them this was essential to the vitality of religion in America, a condition without which the resources resident in lay relationships and ability would not be related, and might be lost altogether.

It is beyond the scope of this volume to identify by name those great lay personalities whose ability and devoted leadership created the early Associations and so largely guided their destiny as a Movement afterward. They brought their fine abilities, their community and business standing, their resources and command of resources, their intrinsic interest, to the opportunities before the Associations; and gave their contributions generously. They did not plot or plan for control of the Associations as a partisan interest, though they saw values in the established programs of Association effort that they identified with their own ways of thinking. When they made their contribution to the joint determination of boards and committees, they reflected their own experience as children of the social influences of their times, and sought for young men the kind of religious purposes they had themselves come to respect.

The rising "institution" of the laymanship, as distinguished from the function of the member and member control, resulted from a selective factor which identified and laid responsibility upon certain particular members who appeared to fit the specifications which had developed for the lay function. These specifications were more than

simply negative, e.g., being other than minister or secretary; for such might be said of most young men. Intrinsic ability was no doubt a factor; for men without it did not continue long in leadership nor in responsible committee work. Deep interest was another element. Financial means, if applied at all as a test, could not have been applied generally; for many without means became and remained among the best examples of lay leadership. The definition of all of the effective elements in lay choice extends beyond the present need. Whatever these may have been, and continue to be, it seems important here to recognize that this ascendancy of the layman was accompanied by declining member participation and control. The primacy of laymen did not at all imply the primacy of the member, except as an object of service; while the ascendancy of the secretary in a measure threatened the significance and function of both (p. 258).

## VI. THE ARTICULATION OF NATIONAL STRUCTURE

By national structure is implied the network of inter-Association arrangements built up prior to 1900 by which the nearly fifteen hundred local Associations, though spanning a continent, attained a measure of unification and sought some degree of united impact upon the life of their time.

The basic philosophy of local responsibility, economic self-containment, and independence affirmed in the first Confederation meeting in 1854, was never modified. The national and other gatherings represented only a small degree of legal control; but many of their actions were possibly more influential than legal sanctions could have been. The "recollections" of McBurney, still preserved in manuscript, reveal clearly the methods and influence of these national gatherings (95).

The Associations shunned the conception of "confederation" after the Civil War, and arranged that the then annual convention itself should become the principal bond of relationship. The International Convention decision to recognize only those Associations that limited local leadership and voting power to evangelical church members was widely copied by the numerous state organizations that came later. It became the cornerstone of the national structure.

### 1. *The State Conventions, Their Agents and Policies*

At the 1866 International Convention at Albany, where there were many innovations, and at subsequent Conventions, the delegates voted strongly in favor of the holding of other Conventions as widely as possible over the country (1866, p. 92).

In response, many state or other field conventions arose, as well as permanent committees and other organizations of the Associations, in the several parts of the country. Table XVIII shows the dates of the

TABLE XVIII  
THE RISE OF STATE AND PROVINCIAL CONVENTIONS OF Y.M.C.A.'S FROM 1866 TO 1900 AND THE NUMBER OF ASSOCIATIONS ATTENDING IN EACH STATE FOR EACH YEAR

	1866	1867	1868	1869	1870	1871	1872	1873	1874	1875	1876	1877	1878	1879	1880	1881	1882	1883	1884	1885	1886	1887	1888	1889	1890	1891	1892	1893	1894	1895	1896	1897	1898	1899	1900	
Maritime Provinces																																				
Ontario-Quebec	..	..	38	45	53	57	44	30	30	22	26	28	37	26	22	27	8	16	27	11	15	14	20	24	33	27	29	32	28	4	31	27	34	34	7	8
Connecticut and D.C.	..	27	17	14	17	15	18	12	10	11	9	11	15	11	11	10	9	11	12	14	15	16	16	17	20	20	11	17	21	24	25	26	22	23	23	(Biennial latterly)
Del., Md., and D.C.	..	8	6	42	15	18	15	15	15	15	10	14	12	10	13	12	13	11	11	11	10	13	15	17	16	15	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	"		
Maine	..	..	38	77	69	60	40	35	60	67	87	42	60	50	29	38	21	24	24	21	24	21	20	17	16	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	
Massachusetts	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..		
Rhode Island	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
New Hampshire	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
New Jersey	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
New York	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
Pennsylvania	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
Vermont	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
West Virginia	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
Old Northwest	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
Illinois	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
Indiana	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
Iowa	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
Michigan	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
Minnesota	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
North Dakota	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
South Dakota	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
Ohio	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
Wisconsin	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
Colorado	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
Kansas	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
Nebaska	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
Missouri	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
Arkansas	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
Oklahoma	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
Texas	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
Alabama	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
Florida	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
Georgia	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
Kentucky	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
Louisiana	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
Mississippi	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
North Carolina	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
South Carolina	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
Tennessee	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
Virginia	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
Arizona	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
California	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
New Mexico	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
Idaho	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
Oregon	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
Washington	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
Totals.....	..	..	26	318	306	374	306	322	318	306	412	415	566	516	318	394	410	499	502	502	584	719	815	877	965	1073	1114	1046	955	926	1056	872	872	969	635	

first meetings of this type in the various states, and also the number of Associations that participated in them for each year up until 1900.

From these meetings, held annually for the most part, there grew up exchange, specialization, and articulation of services that led to the demand for the services of traveling secretaries. In the years that followed this number became substantial. There were no such officers in 1866, 11 in 1876, 23 in 1886, 55 in 1896, and 64 in 1900 (117, 1901, p. 10).

The multiplication of state organizations had decentralized responsibility for organizing new Associations, and for guiding those already organized. It had also created many new problems, one of which related to the respective functions of the International and State Committees. The International work

would not replace but would develop and multiply state organizations, said Dr. Warner, its chairman in 1897; while on the other hand the state work would not replace the International field supervision; for experience shows that in every stage of state or local development the inter-state agency is needed to carry the lesson or warning across state lines. All inter-state enterprises must look to this agency of wider supervision (1897, p. 47).

From this perhaps too naïve harmonization of relationships that were on each side becoming rapidly institutionalized, it is easy to understand the reasoning which led to the logical reconciliation of interests in a formula adopted by the International Convention in 1899, which stood paramount for many years.

RESOLVED,

that the International and State Committees exist as independent supervisory agencies, directly and equally related to the local organization, which is the original and independent unit in the brotherhood of the Young Men's Christian Associations, and that the relation of the supervisory agencies to the local organizations is as a rule advisory.

That in the relations of comity, which have been well established by usage hitherto, it is understood that the International Committee as a rule exercises general and the State Committee exercises close supervision, it being also understood that by the terms general and close nothing is intended inconsistent with the direct and equal relation of each local organization to both the international and state organizations.

That it is desirable that the International Committee, in each department of its work, plan to meet the needs of fields where state and provincial organizations exist, in conference with such organizations, in such a way as to supplement, not duplicate the corresponding department of state or provincial work, and to secure by such adjustment of forces economy of effort, time, and money (1899, p. 62).

In these statements are suggested the problems of "relationships" that were to become acute and to occupy a great amount of interest and energy for years to come. The development of the state services could not, in view of the unevenness of local organizations and resources in certain fields, cover adequately the needs of rapidly developing specialized services. In such circumstances, the function of the International work became confused as between the task of sustaining the weaker state organizations, and the tendency to give direct aid when and where it might be able. The rapid development of some of the distinctive forms of organized work, such as railroad, student, colored, marked the appearance of problem areas in which the agreed relationships of state and national services were found to be very difficult to keep clear. They tended to become conflict areas.

## *2. The International Convention, Its Agents and Policies*

The 1869 Convention at Portland took three important steps. It planned to cover the entire country by means of annual state conventions, which it must have desired and expected to eventuate in organized state forms. It defined the accepted form of local Association that would meet the requirements of the evangelical principle there established. A third significant step was taken toward decentralization:

RESOLVED, that the wonderful progress of the institution in which interest we are assembled, has reached, under God's blessing, such proportions, and gives so great promise as to future growth and usefulness, that in the judgment of this convention, the time has come when the Executive Committee should be entrusted and empowered to make such sub-division of its prerogatives and responsibilities as shall secure the more thorough and detailed systematization of the work among the states and provinces represented in this body; and that this convention does hereby request and authorize such action by the Executive Committee as shall fully organize the institution as a religious power on this continent (1869, p. 7).

In formulating such a policy, the Convention saw its work as primarily related to territorial coverage. As yet it had been without paid staff leadership, except for one "agent" sent to pioneer along the Pacific railroad; and the recent addition of Richard Morse as editor and office aid, soon to become General Secretary of the International Committee, and to give more than forty years of distinguished service to this post (159). It could not foresee the elaboration of the International work into special fields and departments, or the time and manner of such specialized extensions. Conventions, annual until 1879, biennial thereafter, provided opportunity for the International Committee to bring to the Associations the claims of new fields of work as they saw them. Sometimes the Committee itself lagged behind the specific pressure of group interests, such as those of the college Associations in

1877. Their vocal demand for specializing staff guidance was imposed on the Convention and the International Committee, but it was heeded.

It was the custom of several decades for the Convention to receive the report of the International Committee on the responsibilities previously assigned, and then through a Convention committee of its own choosing, "The Committee on the International Committee's Report" and, after discussions and hearings, to give its own recommendations for

TABLE XIX  
INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE EXPENDITURES AUTHORIZED BY SUCCESSIVE CONVENTIONS, 1873 TO 1899

YEAR	AMOUNT AUTHORIZED
1873.....	\$ 7,000
1874.....	15,000
1875.....	20,000
1876.....	20,000
1877.....	20,000
1879.....	22,000 (first biennial Convention)
1881.....	30,000
1883.....	30,000
1885.....	35,000
1887.....	50,000
1889.....	65,000
1891.....	75,000
1893.....	75,000 (\$80,000, with conditions)
1895.....	75,000
1897.....	80,000
1899.....	135,000

emphasis, curtailment, or advance. Through such processes, the Convention voted year by year for increased expenditure for enlarged activities. The authorizations shown in Table XIX indicate the rate of advance.

In keeping with these mounting expenditures, the number of secretaries on the International Committee's staff increased as follows:

1866	1876	1886	1896	1900
None	5	15	28*	43**

\*Included 7 secretaries in foreign service.

\*\*Included 20 secretaries in foreign service.

An elaborate and often confusing network of relationships was now developing, which baffled all efforts to maintain organizational articulation or essential concentration toward specific objectives. There were

- (a) The specialized concerns of the departmental emphases: physical, social, educational, religious.
- (b) The extended services among the specializing types of Associations, among railroad men, college students, rural and indus-

trial areas, the military forces, and the great new challenge of American boyhood.

- (c) The dual responsibility of the nearer state or provincial organizations, and the broader co-ordinating efforts of the International Committee.
- (d) The primacy of lay psychology and sense of responsibility, as yet uncertainly related to the immature guidance of an as yet largely untrained employed staff, feeling its way toward a "professional" attitude of mind, and a sound practical technique, through annual group meetings and experimentation in training arrangements.

### *3. The Local Associations in National Co-operative Relationships*

These as yet uncorrelated diversities came together in the local field, in *each* Association. There, if anywhere, the unification had to be made. So far as it was made, it came about in a variety of ways, among which may be noted:

- (a) *In the executive's mind*, if it were ample enough to view the total development, there was the possibility of administrative harmony of the departmental emphases, on a working basis, even if true integration was not achieved. Many staff executives and members did not achieve such integration, nor did those who pressed the claims of the various aspects of an emphasis always achieve it. If the executive was in a "type" Association, he found it natural to accept the modes of thought and language that grew up around the special work, location, or problem of such group. He accepted the interest and guidance of whatever "agency," state or international, came closest and kept nearest. In this, geography often played but a minor part.
- (b) *In the local lay mind*, all of these adjustments in modes of thought tended to follow the pattern to which the secretary had adjusted himself. He became the nexus, the interpreter. If he was a wise and balanced individual, the natural fellowship of the lay-secretarial relationship permitted the working out of the daily judgments in a mutual spirit, with resulting mutual confidence and respect. If the secretary was an officious or injudicious person, the relationships with responsible laymen were on edge, regardless of his views about the nature of co-operative work, and constructive attitudes awaited a sounder leader.
- (c) At the point of financial support, the local Associations had an opportunity never largely accepted during the period prior to 1900: namely, to relate effectively what services they would authorize as necessary to what they were ready to pay for. Instead, after authorizing extensions in state and national activities in formal convention assembled, they accepted meager responsibility for underwriting the always mounting costs.

Richard C. Morse, writing in 1912, compared the cost of the International work in 1876 and 1912, when far larger sums were required. He added a revealing comment:

By patient and persistent endeavor, a constituency of donors had been built up on the foundation of contributions made at the (International) Conventions. Expenditure for the work authorized by the International Convention steadily increased from \$13,500 in 1876 to \$360,000 in 1912, and the number of contributors from a few hundred to several thousand—a *very large percentage of the total amount coming through large gifts from a small number of donors, the most of whom are members of the Committee*<sup>4</sup> (99, p. 251). (See page 255).

The local Associations had largely rejected the one basis upon which they might have controlled the nature of the national Movement structure and ensured its adequate articulation with local needs (p. 249). Back in 1869, these equal and independent local Associations had solemnly discussed, in Convention assembled, "the relation of the Associations on this continent to each other, as independent organizations, but similarly constituted, and having a common work and aim; and their united power in promoting the cause of Christ among the young men of America." At the same meeting, they had regulated a system of representative participation, in order that the Associations, with fairness to one another, might themselves determine the directions and destinies of their Movement. They also stipulated at this meeting the religious basis of their very relationship to each other, in order that the aims and directions of their united devotion might be safeguarded and verified.

By 1900, the adaptive processes of more than thirty years had established the Movement in a land of great diversity; but, despite the strong-minded leadership of men like McBurney, had so identified it with that diversity, that its own unity was weakened. Its establishment was in terms of *outward identification rather than inward integration*, and its institutional character and acceptance derived more from the former than the latter. It had gained the world. Had it also lost its own soul?

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<sup>4</sup> Italics by the present author.

## CHAPTER IV

# PERIOD OF EXPANSION

*From 1900 Through the World War*

**G**REAT confidence in the future of the Young Men's Christian Association, and a deep sense of mission, characterized the Jubilee Convention in Boston in June, 1901. Similar confidence was manifested at another fiftieth anniversary celebration held in Montreal.

The Boston Convention sought "to celebrate the continuous growth of the North American Associations," and "to derive from a careful review of this first half-century's history, wise suggestion and instruction regarding the Association work of the future." An assembly of 1,198 delegates formally represented 509 Associations, and there were 1,365 corresponding and fraternal delegates besides. The minds of all this company were not chiefly upon the past and its achievements, but upon what they conceived to be a far greater future.

### I. RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY AS SEEN BY THE 1901 JUBILEE CONVENTION

Among the great themes of the Convention were many which sought to review the progress of the preceding half-century. Mr. Cephas Brainerd, for twenty-five years Chairman of the International Committee, sought to identify the principles that had characterized the founding and growth of the Movement. He took his stand upon the "first principles" involved in the Paris Declaration of 1855 (p. 30), stating that "no proposal has been made to change this fundamental declaration" and that "it stands . . . universally approved." Noting the "entire absence of ecclesiastical leadership, of what is known as ecclesiastical organization, and of clerical effort in administration," he asserted that "the real power of the Associations has rested in the fact that the work has been done by laymen as a part of the daily life and service of Christian men engaged in various secular pursuits"; and that "if the Associations are to maintain their progress and their power, they must be continued under lay control, as distinguished from secretarial control."

The "entire adequacy of the local Association" was again extolled, as was the fact that "neither the Convention nor the International Committee had, or now has, any authority in respect of any local Asso-

ciation." Asserting that the principles upon which the Associations were founded, and upon which they had for all these years proceeded were without question still applicable, Mr. Brainerd said, "if we continue to apply them, in faith and with prayer, in future as we have sought to do in the past, none of us can anticipate what these institutions will become in their influence for reformation in the next fifty years" (1901, p. 79).

Judge Seldon P. Spencer of Missouri, later United States Senator, emphasized as "outstanding lessons of fifty years' history" the Association's method of reaching men as a class, irrespective of color, creed, or condition"; the power of interdenominational effort; the technique of associate membership; the adaptability of the work to the diversity of field and constituency; the conception of unity, based upon "recognizing in the local Association the unit where rests the supreme control of the work in each locality"; and finally "the function of an educated secretaryship" (1901, p. 91ff.).

In somewhat more critical fashion, Mr. Herbert B. Ames of Montreal took account of the trend toward urbanization of the culture, the menace of city life, and what "the contribution of the Associations might be toward the solution of the city problem." Said he, "How may it become possible under the conditions necessarily inherent in modern city life, where the many must live within limits by nature adequate but for the few, for the individual to secure that normal development of his physical, social, mental and spiritual nature, which is his God-given, his inalienable right?" Asserting that "the quality of the Association's contribution is of unchallenged excellence—it is the quantity that is as yet all too limited," Mr. Ames said, "our effectiveness might be further increased (1) by *increased membership*, bringing "its claims prominently and repeatedly before the attention of every man between the age of sixteen and twenty-five, within its special constituency"; (2) by *greater differentiation* as illustrated by the trade unions, where "every branch industry, every particular class of employee in each branch, furnishes material for a separate and distinct labor assembly, united by a common interest into a cohesive whole"; and (3) by *fuller adaptation*. "In the struggle for the possession of the young men of our cities, the Association of the future will be all things to all men. It will realize that the power of the saloon, of the gambling hell, of the low theater, lies in the fact that each draws recruits through appealing to a normal desire, and retains devotees by developing an abnormal passion. In open competition with these rivals, the Association may use any legitimate attraction. . . . As the spiritual growth of a chosen few was the keynote of the first period of Association history, and as the all-round development of a greater though still limited number has been the work of the immediate past, so the aggressive reaching out after, the securing possession, the protecting and upbuilding of the many, is the program of the future."

The proposed modes of adaptation were chiefly *extensive* in character. Expansion was the prevailing mood, based upon an assured conviction about the values of the Association and the essential soundness of what it had done in the past. The note of criticism or fundamental evaluation was rarely heard (101). Perhaps the consequences of attitudes widely held in the American culture were not as yet clearly foreseen. For example, there was ready acceptance of the place and, seemingly, the desirability of fixed "classes." Associations did not appear to recognize at all the need for group reconciliation in a culture growing steadily more interdependent, a culture the economic and social arrangements of which were capable of producing cleavages that might threaten even the democracy itself.

It remained for John R. Mott to gather up the resolution of the Jubilee Convention in a prospect which came to represent the characteristic Association philosophy of the period as he came to represent its leadership and policies. This is perhaps to anticipate the significance of his influence in later years; yet already his leadership had become very marked both in America and abroad. Bringing rare gifts in himself, he gave distinctive qualities of courage and devotion to the Association Movement from the moment he entered work in the college field in 1888. He also had a conviction about world evangelization that no other man has voiced more influentially. At the first Northfield Student Conference, called by Moody in 1886, he had volunteered for missionary service. In his work as senior secretary of the Student Department he had been constant in pressing this emphasis. He had made two world tours in the student missionary interest, and participated in 1895 in founding the World Student Christian Federation, uniting the student Christian movements of many lands. From him the Jubilee Convention anticipated a compelling summation of the Association task (158).

Mott reviewed "the great opportunities of the Association Movement on this continent" but maintained that "a far greater opportunity is ours beyond the seas." North America was "not only a battlefield but also a base of aggressive, world-wide operations on behalf of the Kingdom founded by our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ." The Convention was urged "to look upon the North American Associations henceforth not only as a field but also as a mighty force to be wielded on behalf of the evangelization of the multitudinous inhabitants of the earth. This is the larger significance of the Young Men's Christian Association." Notwithstanding the record of the past, "which should banish skepticism, make discouragement impossible, strengthen faith and inspire zeal, we should be more stimulated as we look out upon the far greater conflict which awaits us at the ends of the earth" (1901, pp. 238-247).

The concurrence with such a view was emphatic. None dissented. The prospect of playing a major part in world evangelization was

alluring. It drew enthusiasm from all who had themselves become closely enough identified with the operative life of the Movement to make its purposes an immediate concern. Recognition and resources were forthcoming to give tangibility to these militant plans for expansion. Men saw great visions and made great claims, though with honesty and humility. Mr. Walter Douglas, presenting the argument for completing the proposed Million Dollar Jubilee Fund,<sup>1</sup> referred to these factors having mandatory implications (including reference to the recent war recognitions by the military departments). He held "that God was organizing, disciplining, and building up this mighty Association, which has linked itself to every great interest of society, and at last to the government itself<sup>2</sup> because he had some great part for it in the history and work of this twentieth century, greater perhaps than we had dared to dream of. . . ." (1901, pp. 249-256.)

From these confident utterances, the objective judgment turns to some of the estimates by the public press of the day. It had no reason to be eulogistic and might be more matter of fact in reporting what could be expected.

The *Indianapolis News* said: "Its half-century of life and growth indicates long life for it. It seems to have the spirit of the age in expanding to meet new needs. It becomes of particular value and significance at a time when the cities of the world are growing with such rapidity."

The *New York Tribune* said: "During the last few years the work of the Association has broadened in many ways. Mistaken methods and ideas have been discarded. Physical development has been encouraged. There is little of the narrow pietism to be seen in the various Associations now that in its earlier history was supposed to be dominant. But on the other hand it is no less religious than before, and it still holds to the theological system generally known as evangelical Christianity."

The *Century Magazine* saw the Association as "an organization now standing in the forefront of the large powers of the century. Not only does it lead young men into the church, but it trains them into finer physical manhood, sharpens their minds, and fits them for the fight for better government, individual, municipal, state and national."

The *Toronto Mail and Empire*, recalling that some had earlier feared "the Association would develop into another denomination," found this "not its design, and not its history. Instituted for the purpose of interesting young men, particularly those who by force of circumstances are without home influences, in the reli-

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Douglas, executive of the Philadelphia Association. The Jubilee Fund of one million dollars had been authorized by two preceding Conventions. About one-half of this amount had been raised at the time of the Jubilee Convention.

<sup>2</sup> The reference is to the recent work done in the Spanish-American War, and the resulting enlarged opportunities for service among the armed forces.

gious and moral side of life it has become a center of instruction along lines which make for good citizenship."

The *Boston Beacon* also held that "if one were to sum up in two words the essential object of the Young Men's Christian Association, one would find it in the phrase of good citizenship."

The *Christian Advocate* (*New York*), recognized that "the Association has undergone important modifications. Its original purpose was a unit. That purpose is still recognized, but the methods of work have been specialized. It is almost a university. It aims to provide nourishment and training for every element in symmetrical individuality. The Young Men's Christian Association has had an honorable past, and if it maintains its evangelical spirit and practical sagacity must have a glorious future."

With much discernment the *Outlook* observed, "It may be doubted if the world has yet seen any better or wider exhibition of Christian socialism than in the diversified work of the Young Men's Christian Association for comradeship and culture. At the root of it is that consciousness of human brotherhood to which the Socialist appeals, coupled with a practical recognition of the Christian missionary principle—the spiritual priesthood of all disciples of Christ—each as his brother's keeper, each as an opener of ways by which men may come to God. Its direct evangelical work has been valuable; but most valuable of all has been the indirect influence which it has exercised in breaking down sectarian barriers by quietly ignoring them, and in proving that the spirit of Christ is far more important than any dogmatic definitions about Christ, by showing what that spirit can do when freed from dogmatic definitions. . . . It is getting rid of that sentimentalism which at one time threatened to be its bane, and is more and more appealing to men by methods that are wholly manly. It has long since passed the experimental stage; and though it will never pass beyond the period in which its work may be criticized and therefore improved, it has proven its right to friendly criticism by the spirit in which it has generally treated its critics, its right to the support of churches by the support which it has given to the churches and by its tendency to take up work which the churches are not doing and cannot well do, and leaving alone the work which they are doing; and its right to the support of all intelligently philanthropic men, and especially all broad-minded employers, by the humane and philanthropic work along social and educational lines which it is doing men in a genuine spirit of co-operation" (1901, pp. 317-323).

Thus thinking, equipped, conditioned, and accredited, the Association Movement went forward into the century. Few begrimed its right to do so; many hailed its promise with large hopes. Of shortcomings in terms of its own extensive goals there would of course be many, though further achievements both in America and abroad would be notable. In further differentiation of its means, it would be difficult to keep its ends dominant and clear. In further complicating its structure as a great association, it might perchance overburden the local units in

the very process of serving them. Could it have met the problems of the first two decades of the new century with the experience of the third, it might have stood more nearly even with its opportunity today. In the years immediately following 1900, the word was "Forward." The extending commitments of a policy of expansion were courageously assumed. Adaptation of the Young Men's Christian Association would necessarily continue. Now it would be adaptation especially through expansion.

## II. ADAPTATION THROUGH EXPANSION

Until the outbreak of the World War in 1914, and indeed for two or more years thereafter, the American Associations maintained their calm perspective, watching with satisfaction each new opportunity for enlarged work give way to varied forms of accomplishment. How could they foresee that soon they would be engaged by the onrushing cataclysm of war on a world scale, and find every assumption regarding their nature and mission challenged?

To the Association leaders of these years, such increases represented impressive evidence of wide popular favor in American life. It seemed to indicate a certain destiny. Multiform services to varied classes of young men were continued and extended. The now well-established departments, both those relating to varied constituencies and to the fourfold program emphases, flourished and led to inevitable competition. They enlarged their staffs. They increased their contacts. Each strongly pressed its claims for still further expansion, pointing to undoubted needs and assuming its mission and capacity to serve them adequately. Each sought independently to build up a supporting constituency. The net increase in number of Associations from 1900 to 1921 (not included in Chart I) was 142.9 per cent. This increase was smaller than almost any of the others. Extension into new communities proceeded at a slower rate than expansion of contacts and activities in communities already occupied.

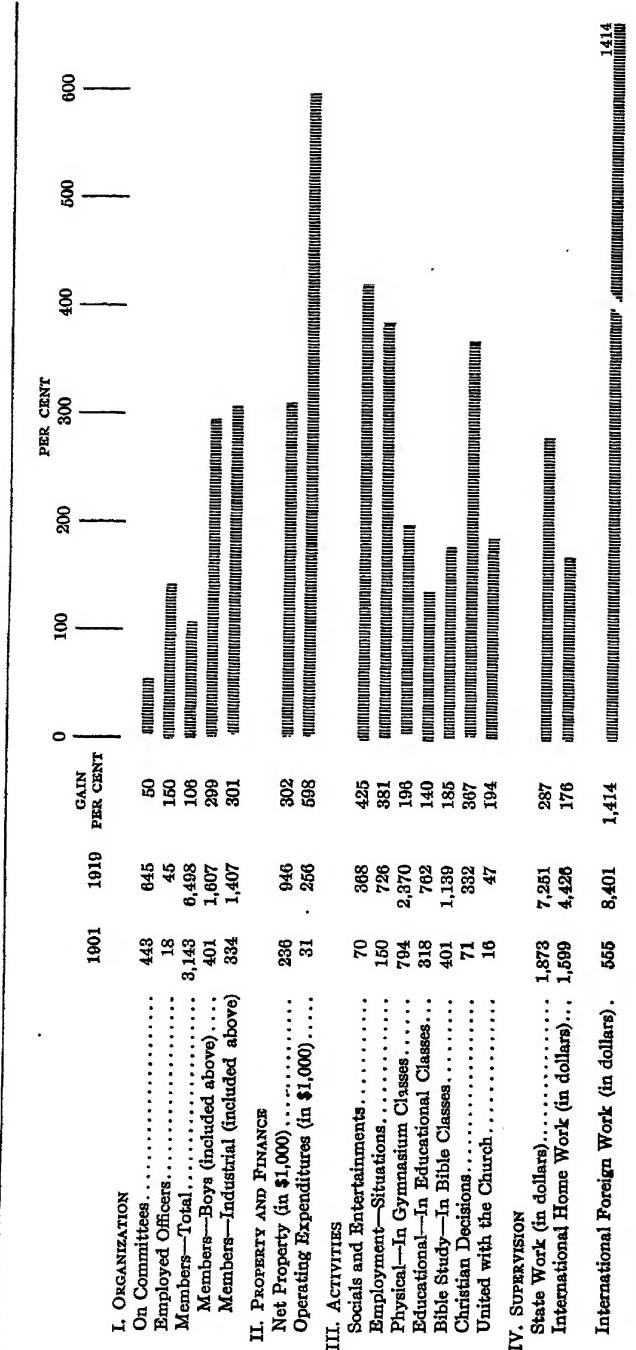
### 1. Expansion Among Principal Constituencies<sup>8</sup>

*Boys' Work*, during this period, came into its own. It had been regarded a generation earlier as a diverting interest which prevented concentration upon work "exclusively for young men" (p. 15) as "the true sphere of the Y.M.C.A." In 1901 the International Convention declared that "there is no more important work before the Associations," and heartily approved the engagement of a special staff member to lead this work. By 1919 boy members had increased threefold, while the total membership doubled. Following this recognition, in 1902, a new periodical, *Association Boys*, was launched, building plans were

<sup>8</sup>See p. 232.

CHART 1

ASSOCIATION MOVEMENT OF NORTH AMERICA  
Its Growth Per Million Population, 1901-1919\*



\*1920, p. 491.

revised to provide ampler space, training of boys' work leaders was begun, and the first independent building exclusively for boys' work was set aside. Specialized gifts for endowment appeared. Work for boys was reported by 498 Associations in 1902, and by 948 in 1920.

Boys' work sought "to build up boys rather than departments" during these years. It encouraged the assignment of specializing boys' workers in other departments. It viewed with concern the concentration of this work in building-centered activities, and sought to co-operate with other agencies interested in boys (1908, p. 26). There were many of these. The success of Scouting in England, under Baden-Powell's leadership had led to many separate similar efforts in this country. Y.M.C.A. leaders, particularly Mr. E. M. Robinson, International Committee Secretary, and certain laymen gave extensive assistance in establishing The Boy Scouts of America as a distinct organization (68).

Extension into the community was followed by intensive efforts in the high-school field, and among employed boys: "Hi-Y" clubs, inaugurated in 1889, numbered 1,213 in 1920. Camping was widely extended. "Father and son" events multiplied. Older boys' conferences were held. Evangelism was extended by means of interviewing programs called "campaigns of friendship." A "Find Yourself Campaign" plan sought to give vocational assistance. An "American Standard Program" was stressed, and led to a more elaborate "Christian Citizenship Training Program" based on the familiar fourfold program philosophy. This was vigorously promoted in both Association and church groups. Boys' workers, numbering nearly four hundred in 1913, gathered in their first North American Assembly. Again in 1920 they met six hundred strong to discuss standardized programs for extending and deepening Association service among America's boyhood.

The adaptation of previous Association program conceptions to the field of boys' work involved more than the extension of prevailing adult activities. It required the creation of new attitudes and program methods, new plans for buildings, new appreciation of the distinctive needs of particular types of boys, new conceptions of the community and of relations to church, school, and other community agencies. Although a tendency toward comprehensive standardization prevailed, the boys' work field during this period must be regarded as an area of experimentation and adjustment that had great interpretive and instrumental significance for the entire Association Movement in the years immediately following (106).

*Work in the Cities* continued to be central in the Association expansion of these years. The movement to the cities of young men, which had begun many decades earlier still continued at flood tide. Here the great buildings were concentrated. Here also control of policies largely centered. Here also some of the more significant relationships and policies were determined. For example, it was recognized in 1910, that

We have a growing but limited contact with working men. Today more than one-third of our members are industrial workers—yet this is less than 2 per cent of the workers between sixteen and forty-four years in the United States and Canada. The masses of these workers are in the great industrial cities where the strongest Associations are found. But in these same cities, only 20 per cent of the membership is drawn from the industrial workers, who form 75 per cent of the population. In other words, we get four-fifths of our members from one-fourth of our constituency (1910, p. 82).

*The Colored Work*, which had tended to concentrate in the cities since its inauguration in 1888, was greatly stimulated by the generous initiative of Mr. Julius Rosenwald, an outstanding Jewish merchant of Chicago, who offered to provide \$25,000 for a building for colored Y.M.C.A. work in any city the colored citizens of which would themselves provide \$75,000. (A total of 27 such buildings had been erected by 1938.) Though constituting a notable recognition of the problems of the colored race, and demonstrating a heartening example of inter-racial and interreligious co-operation, this development served further to identify the Young Men's Christian Association with the city as its characteristic field. On the other hand, the published studies of Dr. W. D. Weatherford, an International Committee student-work staff member, on Negro life in the south and related subjects (43), and the initiative of Association leaders in organizing the Interracial Commission and associated groups widely throughout the South, rural as well as urban, were notable. These leaders pointed out the scope of racial adjustments needed, and achieved a method of permanent value. This was significant institutional adjustment to a major social need.

*Rural work* was extended chiefly through the standard form of county work organization, and by the addition of supervisory specialists to the staffs of state committees for this purpose. In 1920, 210 county committees were reported, with 244 secretaries giving full-time service. Efforts were made for many years to adapt the gymnasium-centered physical programs of city Associations to the non-equipment programs of the rural field. The economic base for the county work was ever precarious. The economic and social problems of rural life were becoming more complex. A rural church conference in 1910, and annual County Life Conferences, were brought about by Association leaders in an effort to deal effectively with these problems, in co-operation with other established agencies. Co-operation with government was evidenced through participation in President Theodore Roosevelt's Commission on Country Life in 1908 and through organizing the "Soldiers of the Soil" to assist in the World War food crisis. Such organizational and extra-organizational expression exhibited both institutional and adaptive tendency. The county work itself, as a non-equipment program, should be regarded as a major adaptation of the typical city pattern. Yet in its efforts to work realistically toward a solution of the

rural problem, institutional patterns dominated in organization and method. Its leaders were not adequately trained to meet the technical problems of an unhealthy rural culture.

*The Student Associations* numbered 611 in 1900, and increased 25 per cent by 1920. Of 764 Associations then existing, 113 were in colored schools, 13 in Indian schools, and 41 in theological schools. Adaptation to these various constituencies had begun thirty years before. In general, the principal characteristics of student work reflected tendencies prevailing in the total life of the organization, as these in turn reflected the larger social changes of the period.

Student work was typically "religious work." Bible Study in groups was the prevailing method. In 1910, 419 Student Associations reported 26,826 men in such classes for two months or more. Such aggregates were eagerly watched and compared year by year. Studies by Dean Edward I. Bosworth of Oberlin and others provided stimulus and method for the much-emphasized "daily" Bible study. The "morning watch" was everywhere urged. Somewhat later, studies by Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick emphasized the same method, and strengthened the appeal of a liberal yet vital religious belief. Student leadership of groups was encouraged.

Soon the student work leaders felt the stirrings of a religious faith not necessarily defined in terms of church membership according to the Portland basis. They pressed, successfully, in the 1907 International Convention for its recognition. Thus began a conflict between a personal and denominational basis of membership affiliation that long occupied the Movement's attention.

Evangelistic "campaigns" flourished in the colleges. New forms of campaign soon became stereotyped. With some outstanding leader for the principal meetings would come a score or more of lesser leaders for group visitation, interviews, and other events designed to make an impact on the entire campus.

The Student Volunteer Movement, which had begun at Mt. Hermon in 1886, became an increasing force during these years. Through "mission study" programs in student Associations, through great quadrennial conventions beginning with 1902, and through individual students volunteering by the thousands for missionary service abroad, the cause of missions prospered. These developments reflected the objective of John R. Mott and his contemporaries, "*The Evangelization of the World in this Generation.*"

Concern on the part of both Associations and churches for the religious needs of students in the rapidly growing state universities led both to adapt their efforts, and brought vigorous discussions of responsibility and policy. Associations asserted that they represented the churches in such service, but the great denominations usually founded church approaches of their own, mistrusting the capacity of the Associations to function for them. The assumption that the Student Asso-

ciation could become the *exclusive* campus religious organization was rejected. It could not always win recognition among the Protestant groups with whom it was chiefly identified. This discussion was a part of a larger problem of relations between Associations and churches, of which later mention will be made.

However, Student Association interest was not wholly confined to the more conventional aspects of religious programs. A social-service emphasis was vigorously pressed in literature and evangelistic efforts, particularly through the addresses of Raymond Robins. An Industrial Service Movement was begun about 1910, by which students undertook to provide English classes and citizenship training among foreign-born and industrial groups in nearly all communities. In 1913 there were said to be 2,000 students from 150 colleges serving about 40,000 men in this way (117, 1913, p. 324). The democratization of student work began with special summer groups exclusively for the training of student secretaries. They were established in certain sections as early as 1907, and nationally in 1910. Distinguished teachers in philosophy and religion made their contributions. These assemblies served to heighten group self-consciousness and to prepare the way for formal recognition by the International Conventions of 1916 and 1919 of "Committees of Counsel." These committees provided for representation from the membership of local Associations by which, soon afterward, the national policies of student work were substantially democratized. That is to say, they were made more independent of the national organization and more responsive to the needs and desires of the student field. This weakening of an established institutional framework represented, on the other hand, the beginning of but another form of institutionalism in a more narrowly defined area (97).

*In Transportation and Industry* the Associations greatly extended their work along lines laid down before 1900. There were 151 railroad Associations in 1900, 244 in 1920. The series of great inspirational conferences for railroad men, begun in 1877, continued at triennial periods. Accepted fourfold activities were conducted in an increasing number of buildings, many of them owned and subsidized by the railway companies. In 1910, 75 companies made such appropriations (117, 1910, p. 18). Railway brotherhoods continued friendly (105).

Organization on the basis of railway systems was undertaken. This directly countered the established institutional lines of state committee supervision. Around this problem one of the bitterest phases of the struggle between national and state organization took place (p. 134). Provisional railroad Associations were recognized. In these, newly organized service points were permitted temporarily to be administered directly by the Transportation Department, in contrast with the usual local membership control. This was regarded in certain quarters as a step toward an unwelcome centralization of control (96).

In industry, also, the policies and directions set before 1900 deter-

mined the development. In 1918, in addition to activities among industrial members in the cities, there were 134 special Associations in smaller fields, for which industries had given buildings costing \$4,717,434. It was stated that companies and employees shared about equally in providing the \$417,761 spent for current work that year (*117*, 1918, p. 21). Among the industries co-operating were iron and steel, textile, mining, lumber, ship-building, munitions and other war industries, most of which in subsequent years have been the center of major conflicts between capital and labor. Throughout this period the Associations believed and practised the "zone of agreement" policy. They sought to help "forward-looking employers and constructive leaders among the workers "to seek to establish a better basis of mutual understanding and co-operation in industry"; believing that "the Association enjoys in growing measure the confidence and good will of both groups"; and choosing to be "an agency of democratic intercourse and common purpose" in the area of industrial relationships. The Associations sought to play a significant rôle, in keeping with their historic institutional character, but undoubtedly found it increasingly clear that something more than non-partisanship would be necessary to solve the increasingly acute problems involved. Of the objectives sought, however, the International Committee itself spoke clearly in its formal report to the International Convention in 1916, where it defined "the zone of agreement" in part as follows:

With reference to organized industry, the field of the Association lies in the zone of agreement between the employer and employee. It does not attempt to adjust issues, but it creates a spirit which enlarges the field of agreement in which issues may be more readily adjusted. It is not partisan. It is more than neutral; it is mutual.

The service of the Association is intended for all of the men of industry—both employer and employees. The active support of both is sought, and the Association does worthy service when it unites employers and employees in mutual Association effort.

Enlisting the confidence and financial resources of industry, both of the employers and employees, is an essential part of the industrial program.

Co-operation with single industries both on the "plant" and "system" basis is being enlarged.

Co-operation with trade unions in appropriate lines of service is being offered and accepted. This is true also of manufacturers' associations, chambers of commerce, and other industrial organizations.

Of all the useful services performed during these years (and they were many), none was more timely than the work with immigrants. Genuine concern arose in the American mind regarding the possibility of assimilating this body of newcomers from other cultures. Under

International Committee staff leadership, services were not only established in American ports of entry, but at many ports of embarkation abroad. In this, as in the extension of the transportation services to young men in the merchant marine, the Associations were again reaching out to groups in need, considering them a logical part of their field, and assuming their ability effectively to meet such needs. The adaptations assumed an extensive, rather than an intensive character.

*The Army and Navy Y.M.C.A.'s* came into full recognition following the Spanish American War. The Secretary of the Navy gave them high commendation in 1903. New buildings were erected through the generosity of friends. When the Atlantic fleet toured the world in 1909, Associations established by this time at many foreign ports exerted themselves in an appreciated hospitality. William Howard Taft, as Governor General of the Philippines, was favorably impressed with what he saw of the Association's service, and facilitated its activities when he was Secretary of War. These experiences ever more closely identified the Y.M.C.A. with the military arm of the government. A secretary was assigned to the Pacific Fleet in 1913 as an experiment. This was regarded favorably by the Navy. The International Committee's report in 1913 said, "the organization is increasingly recognized by the officials at Washington, and by the commanding officers, as an integral part of the life of the Army and Navy." Repeated official calls came for such services on the border, in Cuba, in the Philippines, or on shipboard, as well as for extension to new naval centers such as Honolulu. Franklin D. Roosevelt, then Assistant Secretary of Navy, said in 1916, "You all know about the work that has been done in the navy by the Young Men's Christian Association, and I consider the present efficiency of the navy is due as much to that work as to any other cause" (1916, p. 153).

In 1919, a commission was named to restudy the needs of this service following the World War. Its recommendations were to become the official policy of the Movement. In its study, however, the question of further extension would be profoundly affected by the recent war experiences, and by attitudes of government and public regarding them. In assuming to adapt its work to war conditions as representative of the whole people, the Association met with a final rebuff, the effect of which has been felt down to the present (103).

## 2. Expansion through Established Emphases

Each aspect of the fourfold departmental emphasis developed a specializing staff in both national, state, and local services (110). In the national service, it led to separate budgeting as well, and resulting competition for support among both Associations and individuals. These tendencies did not prevent a measure of adaptation in such emphases. In the social-economic area, however, such development of

specialized staff and budget did not take place. Prophetic social leaders such as Graham Taylor, Washington Gladden, Walter Rauschenbusch, Charles Ellwood, Raymond Robins, and Bishop McConnell continued to be heard in International Conventions and elsewhere. But their messages did not avail to change greatly the established pattern of social education in the Association. The Taylor-Brainerd debate of 1895 (pp. 80-83), seemed to have left the Association ill disposed to deal aggressively with urgent problems in this field. They sought, under the "zone of agreement" policy, to stress the individual Christian virtues, but omitted to challenge the social injustices. The policy sought "to counsel young men and boys to a thoughtful and balanced consideration of their responsibility as individuals in all social questions, to a sympathetic study of the new aspirations of certain groups of our population, and equally to the appreciation of those human principles of law and order upon which any stable state of society must rest" (p. 267). However, the convention that took this action also urged "an increased proportion of personnel representing the constructive Christian forces in labor and their co-operating groups upon boards and directors" (1919, p. 8), and also approved (seven years after their formulation) the "Social Ideals of the Churches," developed by the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America (1919, pp. 8, 20). This latter document has become the historic base-line for both church and Association policy since that time. Achievement, however, has fallen far short. The Association's adaptation was largely negative and protective.

In the physical, educational, and religious areas, the method of class instruction was chiefly relied upon. Marked increases in these activities were noted up to the World War (p. 237).

*Physical activities* predominated. The leadership of Gulick had been effective. There was great demand for the "body-building" activities he introduced. His conception of their place in developing unified personality was not always kept in mind. Competition for its own sake was discouraged (117, 1901, p. 232). Emphasis was placed on right living rather than on muscular exercise, upon diagnosis rather than measurement. The entire community was kept in mind. Social play was provided, and church and industrial play leagues organized nationally. Swimming campaigns were popular. Lay participation in leadership was emphasized. State professional conferences were held for training and the development of standardized programs. Gymnasium classes doubled by 1920. The adaptation in this department sought to reach greater numbers with a varied program better suited to individual and group needs. It sought its directions in the community situation, but continued there to stress and institutionalize its emphasis on physical services alone.

*Educational activities* gained steadily in volume and variety over the twenty-year period. The International staff leader, George B.

Hodge, was sent to Europe in 1909 to study technical schools and trade courses (90). Formal curricular schools were ready to offer courses on the automobile, window-trimming, plumbing, carpentry, and almost any other subject. Apprentice courses were established, with some labor opposition. The effort, apparently, was to extend the offerings in response to observed needs, however numerous or varied.

These offerings were often extended in advance of any provisions in the schools or elsewhere for such courses. In the face of such pioneering and novel adaptations among service men back from the war, a re-statement of policy became necessary. The formation of an Educational Council in 1919 to achieve "more definite and comprehensive organization of Educational Work of the Associations" assured a democratic control of whatever policy and program might be decided upon (1919, p. 566). It ensured moving that educational policy and program to some degree out from the historical framework, and making it more readily responsive to selected community needs. This measure of adaptation, however, did not ensure that elements of institutional pride of method or aim would not survive in the outlook and practice of the newly created "United Y.M.C.A. Schools" and the directing Council.

*The religious emphasis*, as already indicated, rested heavily upon the Bible study movement of the early 1900's. Though prominent in the student work, it was by no means confined to it. Nationally and internationally known leaders of religious thought gave their messages, now liberal, now conservative, pointing the way the Associations should go. Eminent churchmen, themselves Association leaders as well, sought in commissions, boards, and conventions to concentrate the religious efforts of the Associations. Great movements such as the Laymen's Missionary Movement and the Men and Religion Forward Movement commanded the leadership and interest of the Associations, and were in part initiated by them. The interdependent conceptions of evangelism and world missionary effort were readily received. The missionary emphasis meant an increased enthusiasm and support for the Association's own rapidly growing program abroad. Nor was the social emphasis missing from the impact of the Men and Religion Movement's aggressive campaigns in nearly one hundred leading American cities. Yet the Protestant religious forces lacked the unity and conviction, even after the organization at the Federal Council in 1905, needed to cope with the economic and social trends in our divided American culture and in the speedily crumbling world order.

Notable in the religious developments of these years was the constantly recurring problem of relationships between the Associations and the churches. The Portland Convention action had remained unchanged for nearly forty years when in 1907, after dramatic convention debate (1907, pp. 109-132), the alternate personal statement of religious faith was recognized for student Associations. The struggle to secure revision of the Portland Test (p. 51) continued many years and

ended in failure. Some urged a definition of church affiliation based upon *eligibility* for membership in the Federal Council of Churches. (This the Y.W.C.A. had done.) Many regarded any modification of the Portland statement as a basic change in the character of the Movement. They thus exhibited the very substance of the institutional spirit; for, to them, the Portland Test had become sacrosanct—an institution in itself. A few saw a move toward liberalization in the acceptance of the special student basis and regarded it apprehensively as "an entering wedge." Their fears would have been doubled had they been able to foresee the steps subsequent Conventions were to take in the same direction, and further. Yet these "liberalizing" actions did not change the essential character of the affiliation of the Y.M.C.A. with Protestant evangelical thought. Only with difficulty, was this central element in the Y.M.C.A. as an institution able to take account of the potentialities of its large contacts with members of other faiths at home or abroad, or to begin to achieve an ecumenical point of view (p. 265).

Nevertheless, by offering laymen from the churches opportunity to work together around the problems of young men and boys, apart from theological concerns, the Associations were making a substantial contribution to Christian unity. They were moving from institutional modes of relationships toward reality only, however, to reconstruct their dilemma once more.

### 3. *The Building Movement*

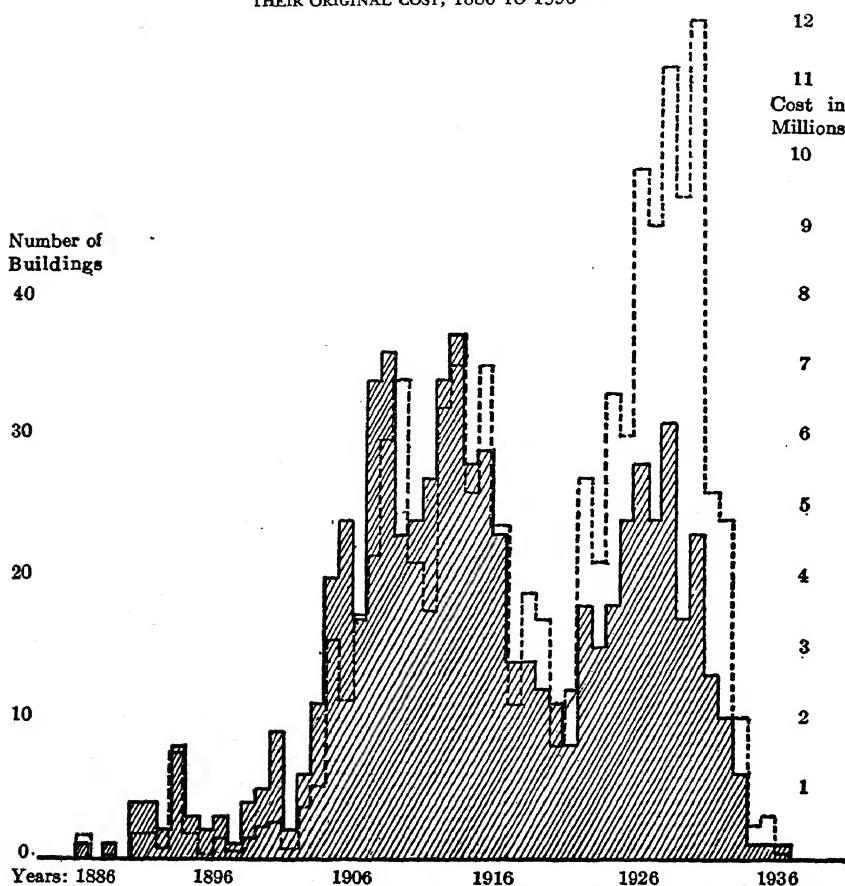
Buildings crystallize the philosophy of Association program activities prevailing at the time of their erection. Only to a limited degree can they be modified to meet later conceptions. They tend to facilitate institutionalization of what is done. It has been a familiar though mistaken idea that the term "institutional" relates only to services thus implemented (p. 252). The institutionalization referred to is broader than the building itself: it refers equally to the methods and aims defined by it and the public opinion that it represents.

During the period from 1900 to 1920 occurred the greatest building movement in Association history. The accompanying chart shows the year of construction of 717 buildings still in use in 1936. In a previous chapter (p. 88), an earlier period of building construction is described. During these years from 1900 to 1916, 290 buildings were erected, representing an outlay of approximately 7 million dollars in certain years. Even these large sums were later exceeded.

Such tremendous developments necessarily rested upon unquestioned conviction not only regarding the permanence of the Association in each community, but also regarding the nature of the general program provided by it. The earlier view that Association buildings should include store space for rental, in preference to small dormitory rooms for young men, passed completely (p. 92). Instead, these new struc-

tures included scores and even hundreds of such dormitory rooms. These were regarded both as a direct service to young men away from home, and as an income-producing investment that, even at moderate

CHART II  
FIFTY YEARS OF BUILDINGS STILL IN USE, AND  
THEIR ORIGINAL COST, 1886 TO 1936\*



\* Scale at left indicates number of buildings. Scale at right indicates cost in millions of dollars. Shaded field represents buildings. Dotted line represents cost.

rates, served at least in prosperous times as endowment. The extensive general meeting hall of earlier buildings gave way to increased gymnasium space so planned as to be used for now less frequent great public occasions. Specialized space for boys' work was provided, though it was not until the latter part of the period that such layouts were comparable in size, equipment, and location with those for adult work. Swimming pools were considered essential. Classrooms were usual. Central reception and supervision were planned for, with central lobbies, at

first very large, then smaller, serving less as places for sitting about than as convenient transit to specialized facilities and programs. It was not long before these arrangements also had some retarding influence upon the programs they made possible. Revisions later became necessary.

The technical planning of these costly structures was first left to general architects under the guidance of local lay committees. Although these latter continued their logical relationship, Associations turned increasingly to the International Committee for help in planning. An architectural service and later a Bureau was added in 1913 to the already numerous activities of the International Committee (117, 1913, p. 159). The technical services of this Bureau have helped hundreds of Associations to plan and spend more wisely for their buildings. At the same time, however, this tended to "fix" and "institutionalize" such forms of program service as might chance to have general acceptance or vogue, and for which the necessary money could be secured.

The task of raising the funds for these buildings itself became a highly technical specialization. The "short-term finance campaign" (see p. 93) was first conceived prior to 1900 as a method of securing memberships and raising debt and other smaller funds. It was developed after 1900 into a major method. "Techniques," consisting of the preparation of prospect lists, building of campaign organization, card solicitation, report meetings, and publicity methods, were refined to such a degree as almost to guarantee in a few days the successful achievement of wisely set goals. It is stated that, from 1903 to 1917, this method "had raised for the Y.M.C.A. alone about \$300,000,000, and had also been used to secure millions for Y.W.C.A.'s, colleges, and hospitals" (115). The method was extended and Association specialists provided for the great national campaigns associated with the World War. Two periods of depression during the twenty years preceding impeded but did not prevent the steady and successful application of this money-raising procedure. Communities vied with one another in their efforts, under the slogan "*What Middletown has done, Anytown can do.*" Something new in community psychology had appeared, which might later become a potent social instrument. This was undoubtedly what President Wilson had in mind when, speaking at the dedication of a new building in Pittsburgh in 1913, he said, "You can test a modern community by the degree of its interest in its Young Men's Christian Association" (111, p. 19) (p. 255).

It was inevitable that the provision of these modern buildings in the cities should tend toward the domination of the Association's policies by city-work methods and points of view. Other departments were at a disadvantage. Railroad, industrial, army and navy, and to some degree college Associations tended also to become building-centered, with all that this implied for institutionalizing their programs of work, their outlook, their management. From its beginnings, the

country type of work sought to concentrate upon the assets of a non-equipment program in smaller communities that could neither provide buildings nor care adequately for "rooms." In boys' work, also, the possibility of reaching boys through group activity in residence areas was never lost sight of, though building work, even in larger cities already having one or more buildings, won considerable attention from 1913 to the World War. It stressed the co-operation of resident agencies, while insisting upon standard Y.M.C.A. organization with small office or equipments for group meetings, or no equipment at all. Vigorous as this interest was in certain cities, its relative weakness served only to accentuate the strength and permanence of the Association dominating commitment to the building instrumentality for achieving its chosen purposes in the community. This was, in effect, a commitment to a policy of relative inflexibility.

#### *4. Policies of Expansion*

As a Christian fellowship, the principle of unlimited extension was implicit in the Association idea. At the beginning, it was assumed that mailing copies of the Boston Association's constitution was in itself sufficient to give both pattern and method of work to the young men of any community. Great numbers of small groups sprang up, only to languish and die. As methods became refined, buildings were erected, standards of recognition were set up, and a professional secretariat established, extension was correspondingly restricted.

Nevertheless, it was believed that these arrangements were adaptable; and that in the Association there existed a flexible instrument "to meet the needs" of any group of young men and boys in any community whatsoever. The basic principles enunciated at the Jubilee Convention in 1901 were still deeply believed in when the World War broke. A leading executive confidently described "the combination that succeeds" in 1913, in referring to the task in American cities, as "(1) a recognized need, (2) a successful history, (3) adequate modern equipment, (4) adequate financial support, (5) tested processes, scientific efficiency, (6) clearly defined objective, (7) co-operative and supplemental relations, (8) representative volunteer service, (9) trained employed leadership, (10) adaptability, and (11) dynamic power" (1913, p. 174). Each of these conditions involved many assumptions, but neither the speaker nor his contemporaries seriously doubted the capacity of the Associations to meet such conditions. The Associations were ultimately to make their work co-terminous with the problem.

To the 1916 International Convention, the International Committee brought an important pronouncement of policy regarding expansion, which was approved by the Convention. It was evident that the numerous departments needed guidance by requirements to avoid the consequences of unwise extension. The action was as follows:

We recognize that as never before in its history the Association is charged with increasing its efficiency in existing fields, broadening its scope of work, and embracing opportunities for wider service. In all such extension and development of its work effective service can be secured only by application of the following principles:

- The principle of home rule: viz., to recognize and develop local independence and initiative by establishing self-directing and self-supporting local Associations and state agencies of supervision in the various areas concerned.

TABLE XX  
RELATIVE OCCUPANCY OF CITIES OF DIFFERENT POPULATION

POPULATION	WITH ASSOCIATIONS PER CENT OF THE WHOLE	WITHOUT ASSOCIATIONS PER CENT OF THE WHOLE
3,000 to 5,000	10.9	89.1
5,000 to 10,000	23.4	76.6
10,000 to 20,000	48.2	51.8
20,000 to 50,000	76.4	23.6
50,000 and up	93.7	6.3

- The principle of efficiency, which involves the prosecution of all Association work with truly scientific thoroughness.
- The principle of outstanding need, which requires that existing conditions should call for the service of the Association in the field in question.
- The principle of trained leadership, which involves the selection and employment of men competent and equipped for the service to be rendered.
- The principle of adequate financial support, which involves the maintenance of proper standards of equipment and leadership (1916, p. 154).

The policy thus set up made the assurance of these results in the local field the basis of judging the need for and appropriateness of further addition of national staff leadership. But it did not serve to limit the optimistic expectation that these conditions could be met almost anywhere. Confidently a "Commission on the Occupation of the Field" reported its studies showing that the Associations were distributed in inverse relation to population. They found

that 38.3 per cent of the total population of the United States lives in cities or communities where one or more kinds of Y.M.C.A.'s are found, and 61.7 per cent of the communities are not thus favored (1919, p. 571).

The core of the report related to more complete occupation of both the "unoccupied" communities and of every other group or con-

stituency with which the Association was then identified. Little attention was given to the work and standing of other community agencies (1919, p. 594ff.). The Association's mission was considered unique, to be entrusted to it alone (p. 245).

### 5. *The Expansion of Services Abroad*

Authorization by the International Convention in 1889 had given authority to the International Committee "to establish such Associations and place such secretaries in the foreign mission field as in its judgment may be proper." Then followed a development so considerable that, before the Jubilee Convention of 1901, the entire Association Movement in this country had been deemed only a "home base" for its development (110). The Associations had taken this challenge seriously. The chart on page 114 shows increased Foreign Work expenditures between 1901 and 1919 of 1,414 per cent. In 1920, thirty-one years after its beginning, the staff of the Foreign Department had increased to 200, the Associations to 434 in 20 different countries, and the annual budget to \$1,468,780 (117, 1920, p. 27). At that time, also, it was urged that "263 additional expert American and Canadian secretaries and specialists" would be required during the triennium then starting, and that 111 of this number were urgently required in 1920. Later, in view of the general financial condition, provision for but 33 new secretaries was made in 1920 (117, 1920, p. 31).

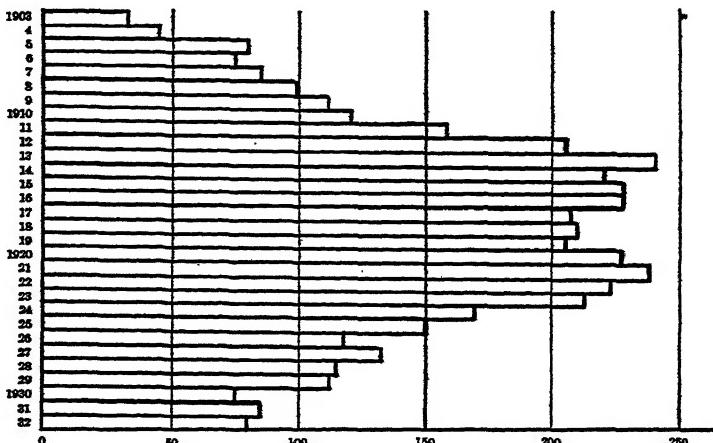
The objective of these great efforts was consistent with established principles recognized as responsible for the extensive development of the American Associations over nearly seventy years. They possessed a deep sense of obligation to extend what they had developed to all who might profit from it. They accepted requests from missionary and other groups to establish "self-supporting, self-directing, and self-propagating Associations" wherever opportunities opened abroad. It was assumed that resources available to the American Associations could, for introductory periods, provide means by which to send tested leaders, and to assist in erecting pattern buildings in strategic centers. It would be the task of resident nationals abroad to carry these enterprises forward.

The growth of the staff chosen and sent abroad during these years, shown in Chart III, is the best measure of the actual investment made in this extension.

It remains for later treatment to comment upon the marked retrenchment of the post-war years, and the results on Association foreign work policy. The bold plans for extension during the early decades must now be reviewed, however, in the light of such later happenings. In the early nineteen hundreds, the only problem was to arouse the American Associations to the magnitude of the opportunity. A gift of \$100,000 by John Wanamaker in 1905 for buildings in Kyoto, Seoul,

and Peking stimulated other givers to a program of buildings similar to that which already dominated the American Movement. President Taft, following his favorable observations of the work of the Associations in the Philippines and in Panama, opened the White House to an historic gathering in 1910 at which a \$2,000,000 foreign building program was underwritten. The beneficence of Julius Rosenwald about the same time in his gifts for colored work buildings in this country stimulated the building program.

CHART III  
AMERICAN SECRETARIES IN FOREIGN SERVICE, 1903-1932  
(Not Including War Service)



So rapid was the development that a representative committee known as the Messer Commission was named in 1915 to review the entire Foreign Work enterprise, and recommend to the American Movement what plans and policies should guide its future. This commission reported to the 1916 International Convention its endorsement of what had already been done, made suggestions for improved administration and training for nationals abroad and those on furlough, and urged even greater extension upon the American base. Among other items, they recommended

That, in view of the magnitude and urgency of the situation confronting the North American Associations in the non-Christian world, and the grave dangers which will result from a failure to seize and to press the unprecedented opportunity, steps should be taken by the Foreign Department of the International Committee to organize and carry through in the near future a comprehensive forward movement to augment greatly the resources of this part of our common work, and that the entire Brotherhood be called upon to support such an adequate policy of advance in all ways within their power (1916, p. 174).

This commission stated that 174 secretaries were then being provided from North America, with 296 nationals in service on the field. It stated that a North American staff of 200 was a practicable objective.

Two years later, Dr. Mott, the General Secretary, reported that "even in war time, the (foreign work) constituency has been greatly augmented . . . in this year by at least 40 per cent, or more than in any previous year"; and that in addition "the year has witnessed by far the largest subscriptions, individually and collectively, toward Foreign Association buildings ever made, in fact more than in all the previous years . . . combined. . . . It shows that the leaders of the Movement still take wide views and long views and are preserving the symmetry of development of the whole work" (117, 1918, p. 10).

The conviction of Mott was shared by many strong laymen, many of whom took a prominent part over the years, not only in support, but also in the committee service related to its administration. Of these, the contribution of William D. Murray, long Chairman of the Foreign Work Committee, was notable (160).

### III. LEADERSHIP IN A PERIOD OF EXPANSION

The commitments in the various expansion projects described were certain to make heavy demands upon the capacity of leaders. It was not assumed that the existing leadership was all-sufficient; but it was not doubted that they and those who came after them could become equal to the undertaking outlined. The secretaryship during the preceding forty years was a group of varied ability, characterized, however, by a rare spirit of devotion. The native gifts of many were of the highest quality. They had begun to meet together for the sharing of their experience on the job back in 1871. They had taken a very active part in formulating the experience of the young Movement both in convention and in written literature. Their contribution must have matched fairly well that of the lay leaders drawn into the work (p. 258). The constant references to the relationship between the secretary and the layman indicate that here were forces somewhat evenly matched in a relationship that would require not less ability on the part of the secretary, but the use of rare abilities in a particular way. For this period such men as Shurtleff, Messer, and Warburton are symbolic (146, 150, and 145).

From 1900 to 1920, the number of secretaries increased greatly to 5,199, a total of 323.1 per cent. If population growth is taken into account (See Chart I, p. 114), the percentage was 150. During the first half of the period, however, little had been done to define standards or press for specialized training. It was true that special centers had been opened at Springfield, Massachusetts, in 1886, and in Chicago in 1890; but these projects represented individual undertakings rather than Movement conviction. The apprentice method had sufficed since

the early eighties, supplemented by the increasingly popular summer centers at Silver Bay, Lake Geneva, and other places. The Secretarial Bureau, which undertook placement services, reported in 1908 that interview or correspondence had been held with 760 persons for 508 vacancies, of which persons 364 had been accepted for positions. The international staff had helped in 260 of these instances. Salaries then ranged from \$480 to \$3,000 per year, with an average of \$1,037. An "encouraging note" was the increased number of college graduates, entering the work; that is, 20 per cent of all entering the service within a five-year period. Of general secretaries then employed, 14 per cent were college graduates. One-tenth of the general secretaries and one-fifth of the physical directors were graduates of either the Springfield or Chicago Colleges. Summer school attendance of the preceding summer had reached 500. Increased length of service and better remuneration were deemed a cause for congratulation. Of general secretaries, 28 per cent had already served from 10 to 34 years. Thirteen per cent were receiving \$2,000 per year or more. It is evident that some of these workers were already viewing the secretaryship as a career, and that some college men of ability regarded the work as a genuine opportunity. Without agreed standards of entrance and training, however, it would be likely that under the practice of local autonomy many local Associations would continue to employ young men without adequate maturity, education, or promise as leaders. If this need could not be met, plans for maintenance, let alone expansion, would surely be jeopardized.

The Employed Officers' Conference had begun its own study of some of these problems when, on the initiative of the presidents of the two training colleges, the 1910 Convention took an action asking for co-ordination of training efforts, and appointing a commission to make recommendations at the next Convention (1910, p. 147). The Employed Officers, meeting the next year, suggested the formation of a group since known as the Conference on the Association Profession, which met early in 1912 for the first of a significant series of annual conferences lasting until this day. This special group at once began to review the problem of training standards, and presently other conditions of work. They were disposed to defer, however, to the established pattern of localism. Being without legal authority, they contented themselves with recommendations urging improvements. When an International Convention Committee of Five reported on training standards in 1913, it met with rebuff when it sought approval of a two-year college requirement before entrance into an approved Association training college. It discouraged "professional" preparation in schools other than those affiliated with the Young Men's Christian Association and bearing its name. Here once more was the institutional factor at work. Co-ordination and standardization of courses in these preferred colleges was urged, and a plan of visitation or inspec-

tion set up. This, again, represented the overshadowing tendency of the institutional interest.

In the report brought to the 1916 Convention, the latter aspect assumed a major importance. The Committee had now recommended a full four years of college prior to entrance upon Association College training, and made other proposals for improving training practices in summer schools. These were brushed aside by a heated discussion of steps necessary to ensure both faculty and graduates being in sincere accord with the evangelical standards of the Portland basis. A rigorous resolution was passed unanimously. Subsequent Conventions renewed discussion of the amount of training necessary, and pressed for better salary levels. In 1919 a request was made for the development of some kind of "certification" for controlling a still promiscuous intake. The life-career view was constantly stressed, but the Conference on the Association Profession found that one-third of those entering this work dropped out each year. Manifestly this was a costly and blundering way of providing competent leadership for the great expansion dreams.

One tangible step taken during these years helped to "stabilize" the secretaryship. It was the proposal that a pension plan, later called the "Retirement Fund," be set up. A responsible group was designated in 1916, and reported a plan in 1919, which became effective early in the 1920's. A careful plan of recruiting visitation devised by C. K. Ober and known as the Ober Fellowship Plan began about 1910 to recruit college graduates of high promise for one or two years of induction training in selected local Associations (161). During ten years or more about 150 able recruits entered the service by this route, and helped to convince the Associations of the value of a quality standard (157).

In these years, the organized professional body known as the Employed Officers' Conference continued to provide occasions for leaders to meet in the years between the triennial Conventions. These meetings became a clearing forum for the problems and policies of the entire Movement, and made patently wider the gulf between the lay and the professional point of view. The great International Conventions were bringing together well over one thousand registered delegates since 1900, not to mention hundreds of corresponding delegates. They were unwieldy, and largely secretarial in make-up. Action was taken in the 1916 Convention to increase the proportion of lay delegates (1916, p. 132). Not until the reorganization of the national Movement structure after the War did the prospect of annual meetings of local delegates, laymen predominating, become a reality. Not until some time later were the secretarial meetings given primarily to their own concerns as an emerging professional group. Hopeful steps in this direction were the meetings of some of the departmental groups of secretaries. The first "assembly" of boys' work secretaries in 1913, the second in 1920, and each succeeding five-year assembly set high stand-

ards as professional gatherings. Engrossed with the vast prospect of American boyhood, these workers early gave themselves to the specific mastery of their task, and exerted strong direct and indirect influence toward more adequate professional workmanship throughout the whole secretaryship.

In summary, it may be said that the emergence of a true professional attitude of mind and group spirit was overshadowed by the persistence of department and institutional influences in both structure and program. Despite these influences, however, there were beginnings of the appreciation of the professional function, and the first steps were taken toward the definition of training and other standards that might in time result in an objective, competent, and yet deeply devoted professional leadership. That protective steps were taken, through the organization of a pension plan, did not necessarily tend to negate this principal trend. In the long run, however, it might prevent a certain "natural selection" of creative leadership.

#### IV. SUPERVISION IN A PERIOD OF EXPANSION

The dominant character of the problem of supervision during this period did not arise primarily from the expansion tendencies of the Movement, but it was profoundly influenced by them. The supervision problem was older. It had grown with the Movement from the beginning. It was now complex and emotionally conditioned. Earnest and devoted men sought over many years to clarify it, to adjudicate differences, to find a solution.

The primary fact was the institution of local autonomy, and its implication for ultimate practical and legal control (p. 245).

The primary condition was the scope and complexity of the supervisory enterprise necessitated by a Movement of such diverse ramifications (p. 249).

The primary issue was the mode of relating or integrating the supervisory activities of the International Committee and the several state committees.

The early Conventions had accredited local autonomy as the cornerstone of Association policy. Soon, also, they were obliged to recognize the desirability of expecting from Executive Committee and other leaders resident in their respective areas a kind of leadership that could be given only by those near at hand. State groupings, reinforced by political, educational, and business patterns, began vigorously to function as co-ordinating and extension agencies within their fields. Conventions, legal organizational form, staffs, programs, and budgets were all well established when the Convention of 1899 took its action assigning *close supervision* to state committees, and *general supervision* to the International Committee, both "as a rule advisory" to the "original and independent" local unit (1899, p. 189).

The period now under review was clearly intermediate in respect of this issue. The formal clarification and attempted reconciliation, which emerged in a "Constitutional Convention" in the mid-twenties, will be described later. Some of the intermediate features require brief definition, for what they later signified. Among these are the following:

1. The second Buffalo Convention in 1904, held fifty years after the original meeting at which the Confederation was organized, even while celebrating fifty years of federation (98) was wracked by debate on the report of a Committee of Twenty-One. (Mr. Cyrus H. McCormick was chairman.) This Committee brought forward the study of working relationships between state and International Committee supervision. Attention was focused on the interstate character of the railway systems and the strongly urged case for "system supervision" by the International Committee railroad staff. High railway officials joined in support of this view. This was elsewhere regarded as a form of central control that invaded the agreed primary duty of the state organizations to give "close" supervision. The principles enunciated four years before regarding local Association primacy were again reaffirmed. It was decided that the International Committee staff should take initiative with the railway system in organizing Associations, which would thereafter come under state supervision in operations and programs. Exceptions were provided for in the form of "provisional" Associations (in railroad, army and navy, and certain industrial and city fields) in which, under exceptional conditions, either supervisory agency might organize and directly administer local work for a limited period. This was generally regarded as a compromise, rather than a solution. In such cases real estate leaseholds or ownership were often involved. Further conflicts were anticipated and the 1904 actions provided a method of arbitration of such disputes.

Such discussions may seem petty, at least in retrospect. The question arises, "Why could they not get on with the job, instead of consuming much time and energy with these purely organizational problems?" The reply is simply that this is a revealing aspect of the basic problem under examination in this study. Geographical and other organizational forms and attitudes had become both emotionalized and institutionalized. Under these conditions, timely response to changing needs in the Association's immediate constituency and in society was continually being thwarted by existing mind-sets, forms, procedures. The fundamental question was, and still is, whether it is possible so to foresee changing needs that the agreed institutional forms may be set up in such way as to retard only slightly if at all, the response to changing need. Institutional tendency is not necessarily a bad thing; some form of it is an inevitable thing in a voluntary association and in the wider operations of any great association. The inquiry is concerned to ask how modification of institutional forms may be made in such

way and time as to facilitate effectiveness of the "basic" ideas which the organization represents.

2. *Joint conferences* were held as recommended following the 1904 discussions by the International staff, with representatives of thirty-two of the thirty-five existing state and provincial committees. The chairman of the International Committee, a layman, himself attended twenty-five of these meetings. It was felt that these conferences "marked an era in the happy development of the united work of the supervisory agencies," and a summary of the findings of these gatherings was widely circulated.

3. *Separate Organization of the Canadian National Council* was effected September 1, 1912. For some years the Canadian Associations, although cherishing the bond through the International Convention with Associations in the United States, had felt the need of closer relationship among themselves. The rising sense of national unity in Canada facilitated this tendency. In due time, they came to feel that the few "provincial" committees should be merged in a single agency responsive directly to the needs of their widely separated local Associations. The "Agreement of Relationships" tentatively proposed in 1912 and confirmed by the International Convention in 1913, gave full autonomy for such distinctive development of Association work in Canada as might seem timely to those Associations. Here was an example of modifying structure and institutional modes in favor of greater realism in service. These instances were not without their influence in the United States. No one as yet seriously proposed such a merger of the state and international agencies as had been achieved there; but the prospect of a genuine unity of approach to the unique problems of Canadian life was hailed by all. Many years passed, however, before the closer-knit agency of a National Council was contemplated south of the Canadian border (117, 1912, p. 320).

4. *Constant Reorganization of the Home Services of the International Committee* took place throughout the decades following 1900. It was recognized that the now complex departmental organization of the "home" services had resulted in much confusion, some overlapping, and considerable competition for support. Strong leaders emerged, and became effectively vocal regarding the claims of the special "work" and constituency they represented. The official reports of the Treasurer of the International Committee for practically the entire period showed separate budgeting of both individual and Association (budget) contributions to these several departments. Some considerable part of the difficulty in the field arose from lack of co-ordination *between* these several departments of the International Committee's Home Work services as it affected the attitudes and practice of co-operation with the state committee programs. The local Associations, still in principle the primary and independent units in the Association organization, were quite without effective means of control. Only the unwieldy Conven-

tions gave opportunity for protest, and the methods of the Conventions made this opportunity very slight. Many "reorganizations" of the home work departments were announced. Some of them involved field or regional functions of co-ordination that, however, were regarded as bringing still an additional "agency" into an already too complex situation. In 1915, the most notable attempt was made to bring order out of growing chaos through a study by a sub-committee of the International Committee known as the Fry Commission (117, 1915, p. 341). The report stated (1) that further improvement was urgent in the co-operation between the state and international agencies (under what was usually called the "dual agency system"); (2) that despite some progress, better co-ordination should be made among the sub-committees of the International Committee; (3) that new leadership would be necessary; (4) that as compared with attention given to various specialized constituencies, the city field in this country had been too much neglected; and (5) that "the time has fully arrived when a readjustment of the departmental organization [of the home work] is desirable." In calling Dr. John R. Mott to the General Secretaryship, the Committee hoped that an executive of sufficient strength might be able to restore confidence and bring needed unity.

Under the leadership of Dr. Mott, the International Committee was to formulate and announce at the 1916 International Convention a significant statement of "Guiding Principles and Chief Points of Emphasis in the Policy of the International Committee" (1916, pp. 18-24), which included the following principal items:

- (a) To promote closer correlation, co-operation and unity of the many and varied departments and phases of Association work.
- (b) To recognize and develop local independence and initiative, and to magnify and strengthen the home rule principle, as illustrated in national and state supervisory agencies.
- (c) To ensure that all the work shall be carried forward with truly scientific thoroughness.
- (d) To encourage wise expansion in all phases of the work throughout North America.
- (e) To hold in prominence the spiritual objective of the Young Men's Christian Associations.
- (f) To re-assert the lay character of the Association Movement.
- (g) To make much more vital and effective our acknowledged relationship to the Church.
- (h) To help determine the relation which the Association should sustain to other organizations and movements concerned with young men and boys.
- (i) To give larger attention to one of the most fundamental needs of the Association Brotherhood—that of insuring a leadership, both lay and secretarial, adequate to meet unprecedented demands.
- (j) To maintain the original international character of the Move-

ment, viz., the union of the Associations of the United States and Canada.

- (k) To guide the Associations in meeting the literally world-wide opportunities of the present hour.

5. *The International Convention* itself was the sole national policy-making body for the complex organization within which the foregoing objectives were to be made effective. One turns to it eagerly to note how far it was in these years an instrument appropriate to its great responsibility. It was true that the International Committee was its interim body, but it was one largely beyond the direct control of the Associations. The Associations had direct representation in the International Convention, but in these latterly the lay voice was in a minority. The fact was that the local Associations had a theoretical rather than a practical control.

The Conventions had been triennial since 1901. This was too long a period for careful budgeting and current expenditure control, which was again left to the interim agency to manage as it would. The successive Conventions heard the various Commission reports on agency relationships, and approved, sometimes with modifications, their hopeful recommendations for better co-ordination. They heard from meeting to meeting reports from a Committee of Five and a Committee of Fifteen on the perennial "Basis" question. The Conventions of 1907, 1910, and 1913 were quite engrossed with this problem; for there were those who felt it time to revise the ambiguous wordings of the Portland Test action in 1869. Some, including distinguished representatives of the Church, felt that, since the organization of the Federal Council of Churches, it would be wiser for the Association to accept that standard of eligibility than to presume to set up its own theological or creedal definition of the word "evangelical." The institutional character of the Portland action was never more clearly revealed than in the heated debate of these Conventions. It was sacrosanct in the eyes of many, and the timely interpretations of the ablest modern churchmen went largely unheeded, so far as their bearing upon structural flexibility was concerned. Efforts to verify the "sympathetic" attitude of Associations, training colleges, and leaders to it were made by a committee of study and visitation. Lists of Associations were found "regular" and "irregular," that is, eligible for representation in the International Convention. Credentials were denied to the unorthodox. The finally accepted alternate personal basis for student Association membership was regarded as a weakening of an historic position, and a danger. The 1913 Convention refused to accept the recommendation permitting Associations so desiring to define "evangelical" in terms of Federal Council eligibility, and rejected any further attempts to revise the Portland definition. (p. 265).

Between these ardent discussions of "the Basis," and the really

remarkable series of addresses that they evoked from significant leaders in social, political, educational, and religious thought, some very simple but far-reaching innovations were introduced. The acceptance of a plan of *Initiative and Referendum* in 1910, although never seriously invoked, represented a growing dissatisfaction with the determination of Movement policies without due consultation of the local Associations as the true center of Movement life. The acceptance in 1916, and again in 1919, of proposals emanating from the student Associations for a direct voice in determining state and national policies for their work was especially notable. Student leaders were tiring of "remote control" of student work policies, and sought to associate *Committees of Counsel* direct from the campus, including student members, to sit with recognized standing in the existing policy-making bodies. From these early groups arose later the relatively autonomous Student Division, which has sought to be freed of much of the organizational controversy arising from geographical jurisdictions. Notable also was the long-delayed authorization, in 1919, of a *Budget Reviewing Committee*, which, however, was expected in the hectic hours of a Convention sitting to examine budget proposals and fix some intelligent limit to the ever-growing expenditure programs of the international work, whether at home or abroad. Being without adequate powers, this committee was more important as a symbol than as a control. The budget ceiling could be raised by a mere Convention motion, and this was often done. Most important of all, however, was the decision taken by the International Convention of 1919 for a complete re-examination of the composition of the Conventions and their method of work. This action overshadowed the familiar discussions of that year about means of interrelating the financing of state and international supervision, concerning which the local Associations continued to be relatively powerless. The Committee of Thirty-Three, set up under the action just referred to, became the pivotal group in the long controversy around the problem of supervision. They brought forth a report to the 1922 Convention distinguished for its frankness; and on this basis a "Constitutional Convention" was summoned. The results of this gathering became the pattern for the final period of this study. At the same time, an intensive investigation of the work and function of the International Committee itself was launched, this time with assistance from a Foundation, and by outside investigators.

Thus came to an end a period of remarkable expansion in Association activity and responsibility. It was an expansion that lacked, however, the successful co-ordination of devices and agencies necessary for ensuring essential unity. Had not the World War intervened, some earlier solution might have been hoped for. As it happened, however, the Associations, like the entire nation of which they were a part, were plunged into an expansion of efforts beyond their wildest contemplation. In this they found unity, but a unity too demanding and arbit-

trary to survive. From this fiery trial, they emerged earnestly seeking a better way forward. All of the cherished modes of behavior of the past, personal and organizational, were caught up in a prospect in which intelligent readjustment would certainly be necessary.

#### V. THE AMERICAN Y.M.C.A. AND THE WORLD WAR

The service performed by the American Associations in the World War has been authoritatively described in the two-volume report entitled, *Service with Fighting Men*, issued in 1922 by the International Committee. Chief Justice Taft, in his foreword to this detailed history of this service, says:

This work sets forth one of the greatest achievements of peace in all the history of human welfare. The American Young Men's Christian Association in its welfare work served between four and five millions of American soldiers and sailors, at home and overseas. As General Pershing has said, it conducted nine-tenths of the welfare work among the American forces in Europe. Moreover, alone among American welfare societies, this organization, first and last, ministered to not less than nineteen millions of the soldiers of the Allied armies and extended its helpful activities to over five millions of prisoners of war. It may be questioned whether in all time a human society has ever brought its helpful ministry to such vast numbers of men over such wide areas, under such varying conditions, and in so short a time (122, p. vii).

The war work activities of the Y.M.C.A. have peculiar significance for the present study. This service for millions of young men making up the civilian army was of such huge dimension as almost to dwarf the regular activities of the organization. What assumptions about obligation led the Associations to undertake this service? Hazards beyond any previous undertakings were involved because of the foreign character of the principal military operations. What was it that carried the American Associations into this undertaking? What did it signify for the normal relationships of peace time, and for policy in the future (p. 267)?

First of all, to render such service at all is evidence of the effort of the Associations to adapt their work to conditions that emerged with unprecedented suddenness. The ability to turn felt obligations into action at so many points in the world in so brief a time, suggests an adaptive capacity resident in the organization that needed only a crisis to make it effective.

Precedents of more than fifty years led the General Secretary of the International Committee to offer the services of the organization to President Wilson within a few hours after the break of relations with Germany in April, 1917. The story of service to soldiers in the Civil War has already been sketched (p. 39). The U. S. Christian Commis-

sion, set up as a popular agency for the Civil War work, disappeared after the war ended, its work completed. The Commission sent 4,859 "delegates" to the battlefields. There followed various peace-time experiments in adapting Association service to the needs of men in military service, both in militia camps and in a few permanent posts. These led to requests and offers that this service be extended at the time of the Spanish-American war. During that war 528 secretaries had served with American troops in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines. Requests followed from both War and Navy Departments for permanent services in the posts and ports of this country and in distant possessions. Gradually this service was undertaken, apparently with great acceptability from governmental departments. Service in the Russo-Japanese War was also instituted by the American foreign staff at work in Japan. This had greatly appealed to the imagination of the American Associations, and the Emperor's subsequent gift in recognition of this service seemed to indicate that a course had been pursued that would result in greatly extended opportunities for the Associations' peace-time ministry. The Associations of certain other countries had in other instances followed these patterns successfully. Also, when first U. S. mobilization occurred on the Mexican border in 1912, two large tents with five secretaries were at work. These services led to subsequent requests for enlargements among various expeditions and service units (117, 1915, p. 326). When the great Border mobilization of 1916 occurred, the Y.M.C.A. immediately assigned 374 secretaries and provided 42 buildings, with extensive activity programs.

Not only had the American Associations had these earlier contacts with the military services, but at the outbreak of the World War the Association organizations in Great Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and India immediately undertook work with their respective armed forces. Before America entered the war there were over 1,500 of these centers in operation. More than 150 American secretaries were already at work under the British Associations. In 1914, Dr. Mott had visited Europe to open the way for welfare work for prisoners and others in all of the warring countries. The undertakings had led to great extension and wide approval, and had met with great interest both among the local Associations and the American people.

When, therefore, America at last entered the war, Dr. Mott's proffer of Y.M.C.A. services rested upon a practical background of actual demonstration through many years. There was definite confidence among the military and the public as to what might be done, and a ready state of mind among the Associations themselves. In the face of the emergency, Association leaders all but forgot the organizational struggles that had so long occupied them, and plunged unitedly into the task ahead. They approved, by hastily summoned informal conference, the organization of a National War Work Council. They applied their successful technique for money raising to the securing of

unprecedented sums. They threw into action thousands of newly recruited representatives in Europe and elsewhere, and, until and beyond the war's close, worked with abandon toward American and Allied victory.

The war work of the American Associations took them not only into the cantonments of the home land, into its war industries, its college S.A.T.C. camps, its ports of embarkation and its ships at sea. It took their workers to the ports, bases, and battlefields of France and Italy, into the army of occupation in Germany and among the Allied armies in every part of Eastern Europe, the Near East, and Russia and the Far East. The Table XXI shows the number of personnel involved in these services. They were almost five times the number normally at work in peace-time America (122, p. 112).

TABLE XXI  
ASSOCIATION PERSONNEL IN WORLD WAR SERVICES

	HOME	A. E. F.	ALLIED ARMIES AND PRISONERS	TOTAL OVERSEAS	GRAND TOTAL
Men.....	11,306	8,045	1,430	9,475	20,781
Women.....	1,665	3,401	79	3,480	5,145
Total.....	12,971	11,446	1,509	12,955	25,926

Of 13,000 workers sent to France, only 750 had been regular peace-time Association secretaries. This fact illustrates how the Associations, like the government itself, were confronted with an enormous task of locating, judging, equipping, and assigning these workers. It would not be strange if some among them were less than qualified for the tasks required. Those who entered this service represented thirty-four major occupations (122, p. 115). In this service, 276 died or were wounded in service; 355 were decorated, cited, and commended. Of the dead and wounded, 218 were casualties overseas, 58 at home. There were killed in battle zones, 9; wounded and gassed in battle zones, 126; died of wounds and accidents, 15.

That there ensued in the latter months of the war period and subsequently a period of intense criticism among the American soldiers served as a matter of public record if not of lively memory. It is not the task of this discussion to appraise this aspect. It does not bear directly upon the immediate analysis. The Chief Justice in his Foreword referred to this in the following terms:

During the war, the burdens put upon the Young Men's Christian Association by the Government were too heavy. The limitations imposed by the paramount requirements of the campaign prevented it from doing all that was assigned to it. The Government gave up the canteen work overseas, and required the Y.M.C.A. to

take it over. The difficulties that it had to meet are fully set forth in these volumes, and the shortcomings of the service are candidly recognized and stated. These, which it was impossible to avoid, taken with the attitude of discontent of our soldiers after the Armistice, psychologically natural in their impatience to get home, led many to utter complaints and spread criticism that did the Association great injustice. Fortunately, a proper sense of proportion has returned and the probability of injury to the prestige of the Association, which was so freely predicted, has faded away, and the institution is today stronger than ever in the appreciation of the people (122, p. x).

When the Association again assembled in Convention in 1919, a great service honestly performed behind them, what meaning had it for them and for the future? On that occasion, they appeared chiefly concerned to enter into opportunities that resulted from the contents of the war, both at home and abroad. The essential work during the war period had been stated as follows:

The military leaders did welcome these agencies as allies in the work of keeping men physically and morally fit. They were called upon to assist in providing extra comforts, physical and mental relaxation, and spiritual refreshment whose purpose was to relieve as far as possible the abnormal strain that developed to such disturbing proportions under the new conditions in the World War (122, p. 45).

Important as this service was, it was essentially different from that uppermost in peace-time activities. If natural peace-time results were to flow from these new relationships, adjustments would be called for both in assumptions and in methods of work.

It may be doubted, however, if the underlying points of view changed to any large degree. The Associations, being devoted to work among young men of all classes wherever they might be, felt a natural obligation to those in the military services whether in peace or war. Such services had always won public sympathy since the time of Florence Nightingale. Perhaps the basic error, if such it was, consisted in attempting to play such a comprehensive rôle. It would seem impossible for a Protestant religious organization, even in war time, to act as representative of all the people (p. 262). Civilian in character as it was, it could not become a public agency or serve in a public capacity without exposing itself to the reservations or resistance of those who held fundamental doubt as to its disinterestedness. It had long been a familiar Association conviction that what it had would be good for all, and that its duty lay in extending these benefits. This view was consistently "evangelistic" in nature. It gained support from the evangelical position even when this was not fully observed. Attention was more largely concentrated, however, upon extension of contacts than upon creating character or citizenship according to a Christian pattern.

Accustomed to working extensively rather than intensively, and relying heavily upon organizational or structural strength, the post-war Associations had great need to re-examine both objectives, methods, and structure (p. 235). They had institutionalized all of these through the preoccupations of many years of establishment and expansion. Significant adaptation to the realities of post-war America would require fresh thinking at each of these points. When the Associations gathered in their 1919 Convention, however, in the midst of unprecedented scrutiny and criticism, only at a few points did the disturbing insights of a genuine revaluation enter into what was done. There were the customary reaffirmations, the same familiar arguments for expansion. But few were sufficiently realistic to recognize that the period of expansion as such was nearly ended, and that a period of fundamental readjustment was inevitable.

## CHAPTER V

### PERIOD OF READJUSTMENT

*From the World War to the Present*

SIGNIFICANT readjustments have characterized the Young Men's Christian Association Movement in the United States since the World War. The periods prior to the World War were necessarily to some degree also periods of readjustment. Yet the essential character of the Young Men's Christian Association did not change greatly from the 1880's up to 1900. The period that followed, up to the end of the World War, was very largely an extension of what had been previously developed. Since the World War, however, certain important modifications merit critical attention. Some of these readjustments bear significantly upon the future; and measure, to some degree, the dynamic aspect of the Association's current adaptability. It cannot of course be asserted that such changes have by any means reconstituted the typical pattern of Association life developed before the World War. Nor were all of the adjustments consciously desired or determined from within. But it has been demonstrated that in certain areas at least modification was deliberately planned and gradually achieved. From these instances, taken in their setting, the possibilities of effective modification for the organization as a whole may be judged.

Recently the adjustments of policy and method in the large Minneapolis Association have been comprehensively documented over the period since the Civil War (114). The significant aspects of operating policy and philosophy which are credited with making the Association the force in that community it has undoubtedly become, fifteen in all, give ground for hope that all or most of them may be applied with slight adaptation in other cities and to some degree in the Association Movement as a whole.

It is a task for critical judgment to determine how far the readjustments made since the World War fulfil what was to be expected at its close or what may yet be required for the future. That the various modifications have not as yet fully met such tests is revealed by the variety and urgency of the issues still awaiting solution. These are considered in Chapter IX.

#### I. CREATION AND MODIFICATION OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL

The problem of maintaining effective unity among the Associa-

tions has received much attention in preceding chapters. As the early Associations became numerous and, though widely scattered, conscious of their own need for fellowship and joint relationship, they instituted arrangements from which, in time, one of the strongest institutional manifestations of the Association's history arose (p. 249).

The International Conventions themselves had long encouraged, and the staff representatives of the International Committee had usually facilitated, the development of strong state organizations and committees. As these agencies of state supervision grew in strength and experience, confusion developed as between state and national authorities. Serious overlapping of functions and services was charged. Heavy costs had resulted to local Associations. Despite numerous discussions and legislative attempts during the fifteen years preceding the World War, the "dual" agency plan of supervision was still a source of conflict. A compromise reached in 1904 had even provided for arbitration of disputes between national and state authorities.

A vigorous movement arose demanding that control of the supervisory agencies be returned to the local Associations. The composition and activities of the International Convention were a vulnerable point of attack. These Conventions had become unevenly representative, both as to constituency and geography. They were often dominated by the secretarial group, frequently of disproportionate size. They met infrequently. In 1919, the Convention authorized a special study by the Committee of Thirty-Three to lay plans for making the Conventions more representative. A larger participation of lay delegates was specifically desired. Following debate upon the report of the special committee, in 1922, a "constitutional convention" was decided on to consider proposals for reorganization of the entire structure of the Movement. Extensive discussions ensued, and as many as a dozen different plans were offered and debated. The Constitutional Convention, held in Cleveland in November, 1923, adopted a formal constitution.

Before this new instrument of unity is described, reference must be made to an interim development of importance. The long-standing conflict around the problem of supervision had been a matter of concern both within the Association organization and beyond it. Among those concerned was Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., long a friend of the Y.M.C.A. In his letter to Dr. John R. Mott, General Secretary, under date of July 11, 1921, Mr. Rockefeller stated the problem as follows:

In thinking over the work which this great world Movement is carrying on through its various organizations, I have reflected that these organizations as they exist today are, generally speaking, a development from small beginnings, and probably do not in any instance represent a plan of organization, such as would be evolved to do the work of any one of these units, were those now in charge

to sit down today and work out a plan of organization best adapted to handle the volume of business now being conducted.

This has led me to wonder whether a great service might not be rendered to the Y.M.C.A. Movement if a careful, exhaustive, scientific study were to be made of the machines, national, international, state and city (at least typical instances of the last two classes), which are turning out this great volume of splendid work. May it not be that in the light of the findings of such a survey, reorganizations could be effected which would modernize the handling of the work of the Association, effect economies, prevent overlapping, bring about better co-ordination and co-operation between the various units, and lead to the development of an interrelation of all of the various Y.M.C.A. organizations which would be more logical, more effective, and more desirable than that which now exists? (134, p. 1)

In due course, the International Committee accepted the proffer of such a study, suggesting, however, that its scope be limited to the organization of the International Committee itself, without including state committees and local Associations. This limitation was accepted. The study was completed and published under date of November 1, 1923. The director of the study, Mr. Mark M. Jones, was present by request at the Constitutional Convention held during the same month, and contributed his observations upon the type of reorganization and unification needed. Among the principal criticisms made in the report were the following:

Because the work of the International Committee has reached such proportions in recent years, the present administrative methods are unequal to the task of keeping the organization under control. . . . Long handicapped by a complex and illogical relationship to its constituency, the Committee is now facing acute internal problems of its own . . . [such as]

1. The balance of control and responsibility as between laymen and employed personnel has been completely upset.
2. With the decline of lay effectiveness, the secretarial staff has come into greater prominence.
3. In its business operations . . . the Committee has problems of great magnitude . . . in need of prompt attention, . . . with a record of cash deficits running year after year [in three particular departments] at a greatly increased rate since the War.
4. Should the present Committee, which is largely an unorganized aggregation, give way to a carefully planned, centrally controlled, and scientifically co-ordinated organization?
5. The final problem in which the Committee has been inextricably involved and which unfortunately it has not itself had the power to solve is its present illogical relationship to other Y.M.C.A. agencies. . . . Including the State Com-

mittees, it is fair to say that the International Committee is competing for support with fifty-five other Y.M.C.A. agencies which constitute a group separate and distinct from the local Associations (*134*, p. 3ff.).

The substance of this significant report, when given orally to the Constitutional Convention by Mr. Jones, seemed to favor complete "centralization" of agency services (See Item 4). At once, those related to existing state organizations were alarmed, seeking to justify the continuance of their separate status on the basis of work done. In this they were also supported by many local Associations. As a result, the Constitution that resulted from the deliberations was really a compromise. It provided various new devices for "co-ordinating" the work of the various agencies in the interest of efficiency and economy, but did not provide the element of central control strongly urged by the survey. The Jones report did find many things to commend in the extensive scope of the far-flung organization. It asked that the proposed plan of organization not be regarded as "a final solution of the problem." Certainly the Constitutional Convention and the Associations themselves did not so regard it.

The National Council was made up of representatives of local Associations chosen by "districts" composed of four thousand active members. There were to be overlapping terms of representation to permit annual renewal of one-third of the members. The Council members so selected totaled approximately 325. Two-thirds of the members were laymen. An annual legislative meeting of some days was established. The Council had authority to approve an annual budget for the work falling directly within its own program. In addition, it could receive and approve the budgets of state committees and training agencies. A Secretarial Cabinet was authorized, made up of executives of national and state organizations, to meet annually for clearance of operating policies. The first meeting of the National Council was held in 1924. It met annually thereafter, with the exception of a longer interval between October, 1936, and May, 1937, caused by a change from fall to spring calendar.

The organization of the National Council represented a major attempt to achieve effective unity. A serious effort was made to encourage and protect the representative voice of the local Associations. But it was soon found impossible for such representatives, sitting as members of the Council, to commit their Associations to definite amounts of financial support. It was easy to vote for budgets built on the basis of need without reference to assured support. With the general expansion tendencies of the 1920's the budgets rose steadily, both for the work in the United States and work abroad. The old practice of turning to private individuals to avoid deficits at the end of the year was still relied upon. Many Associations felt their actual control over poli-

cies and expenditures was slight, and that in practice, despite review of state budgets by the Council, the state and national agencies were almost as independent as ever. Meanwhile, many state organizations had been reduced to small scope, particularly where there were few organized Associations to provide a base for any real supervisory service. Certain states began experiments with neighboring states in maintaining such joint administrative and program assistance as they required. The validity of the federal-state pattern of organization was being questioned here and there. Some time previously, it had been abolished by the Young Women's Christian Association.

The old International Committee had not ceased to exist when the National Council was organized. It had become a kind of "holding" organization in keeping with its charter responsibility as custodian of endowments and because of long existing and valuable banking connections. It carried no program functions and, as a self-perpetuating body, had no direct connection with program determination. However, in 1931, when the effects of the second post-war depression began to cause heavy deficits and bank overdrafts, the National Council itself accepted a hurriedly framed recommendation to return the Foreign Work to the direct responsibility of the International Committee. This entirely unforeseen development was born in part from anxiety to save the Foreign Work from curtailment believed imminent; in part to reassure banking connections during a time of serious operating problems; and probably in part, also, to some desire of individuals to return to the type of organizational control existing prior to the National Council. As a result of the 1931 action, the Foreign Work was somewhat further removed from the direct responsibility of the Associations for control of its policy and the provision of necessary funds.

Although the task of the National Council itself was thus somewhat simplified, other serious problems demanded united planning and action. The inroads of the 1929 depression had become heavy. Many state organizations were very weak. The resources of all agencies were threatened. The greatly enlarged need of youth under depression conditions was omnipresent. Necessary curtailment of expenditures in both national and state budgets accelerated further reorganization. Income from contributions, whether from Associations, or individuals, or from community chests, was dropping sharply. Based on 1929 as 100, contributions in 1935 to local Associations were 64.1 per cent; to state committees, 42.7 per cent; to the training agencies, 56.8 per cent; to National (domestic) services, 38.7 per cent; and to foreign services, 29.6 per cent.

In 1933, the National Council made a further "inside" survey. Mr. Cecil Gamble, its chairman, proposed a new and simpler basis for practical unification of agency services and practices, the main features of which were as follows:

- I. That geographical units or areas for the field organization of General Agency service be large enough to support in each case a secretarial staff of diversified and marked abilities.
- II. That there be a unified financial approach to member Associations coupled with such educational efforts as may be necessary to a proper understanding of the co-operative enterprises of the Association Movement.
- III. That the composition of the Area Councils and of the National Council be such as to insure identity of interest, common responsibility, and mutual understanding of needs and policies.
- IV. That the Area Executives be employed by the General Board on the joint nomination of the National General Secretary and the respective Area Councils.
- V. That for the accomplishment of essential administration unity and efficiency of agency service for the Movement as a whole, there be a National General Secretary's Cabinet, of which the Executives of the Areas shall be members.
- VI. That Associations in present state or interstate organizations which desire to bring their General Agency Service in line with the principles here set forth and as a step toward the establishment of areas, may do so by taking suitable action through the State Associations, looking to organic affiliation with the National Council. The General Board may then develop and establish areas in co-operation with the member Associations of two or more states, or with those of a single state where an adequate financial base is assured (1933, p. 12).

In presenting this plan, it was urged

- that the legislation was permissive in character.
- that the aim was to compose a geographical unit of sufficient size and economic strength to maintain a competent and diversified staff.
- that official committees chosen by such fields or Areas would at the same time function in the National Council for these Associations.
- that a single financial appeal would be made to the Associations for support, to include the approved budgets of both agencies.
- that a smaller total supervisory staff, and one more closely co-ordinated in service, would be necessary than had been employed by the agencies separately.
- that the executives of Area staffs would be members of the executive planning group to deal with Movement problems as a whole.
- that individual states, prior to the formation of Areas, might take an intermediate step by becoming affiliated states, with joint financing, and other steps toward effective co-ordination.

The "co-operative" aspect of such jointly planned services, as

against the "supervisory" aspect of services imposed, met with wide approval. Resistance to the recent reorganization has since arisen chiefly in places where the old form of independent state organization was exceptionally strong, or where the basis of support rested more upon the resources of the so-called "unorganized field" or of private individuals. Such representatives believe strongly in the essential soundness of the earlier theory of state organizations as being able to give "close supervision." They have felt their continuance necessary to provide such intensive guidance. Others insist that as intense, and much more diversified and competent guidance, can be provided under the unified co-operative plan that has been devised. Since the adoption of this "Area Plan," six new areas have been formed. Others are in immediate prospect. Affiliated states are numerous. The still independent state organizations are found chiefly in the central west and the east. Some of these states may ultimately be able to qualify under the Area plan without combining with adjacent states, having in themselves numerous Associations and an adequate basis of support.

Thus another stage in organizational adaptation has taken place. The problem of unity has not as yet been wholly solved, but a plan has been devised that gives promise of providing a genuine solution. If the question is raised as to why this adjustment could not have been accomplished at some earlier time, it would appear that such adjustments depend in large part upon the emergence of particular leaders, such as was John E. Manley in 1932 and 1933, and in part also upon the gradual maturing of a state of readiness in which growing discontent and a vision of what might be play important parts. The depression influences were undoubtedly a considerable factor.

Final legal steps were taken in 1935 and 1936 by which the relationship between the National Council and the International Committee were fully reconciled. The latter, which had continued to be the holding agency for certain endowment and banking matters and which had also administered the Foreign Work since 1931, became in 1936 directly responsible to the National Council, and thus, to the local Associations. Work in America and abroad was reconstituted under a National Board and an International Board, each with a chief executive responsible to the General Secretary. This integration has effected a genuine unification of interests. It has brought fiscal management and resources into direct relationship with the real needs of the program at home and abroad, notwithstanding the fact that the trustees of the International Committee continue to be self-perpetuating. The integration has served to keep the home and foreign programs in relationship and balance. It has re-established the local Associations' control of the policies of both, subject, however, to whatever pressure the trustees may apply through their control of credit.

These adjustments have demonstrated the capacity of the Association Movement to work out greatly needed changes in the national

relationships of Associations. Such achievement came after much tension and controversy, and was long delayed. The character of the outcome suggests, however, that it may be possible in the future to work out somewhat more promptly any further changes needed.

## II. CHANGES IN CONSTITUENCY

There is slight evidence that the nature of the Association constituency has greatly changed since the World War, with one significant exception: namely, the development of a considerable membership among women and girls. This will be commented upon later (p. 232).

In 1930 there were 1,036,862 members reported by local Associations, as against 868,892 in 1920. This was an apparent gain of 25 per cent against a gain in population of 15 per cent for persons aged ten to thirty-five for the same period. If allowance is made, however, for inclusion of boys under twelve for the first time in 1930, the gains are probably quite similar. Women and girl members were not included in either figure. A somewhat better showing was made on the basis of participation in activities rather than of membership, since increasing numbers of persons were so admitted without reference to membership. In 1937, 231 Associations so reported more than 192,000 persons.

Religious affiliation of members was last reported nationally in 1932, when 80.5 per cent were given as Protestant, 13.4 per cent as Catholic, 3.3 per cent as Hebrew, and 2.8 as communicants of other faiths. Among those participating in activities, but not registered as members, the Protestant proportion was given as 68.7 per cent. These proportions correspond roughly to available recent local membership surveys.

In occupational distribution, the general predominance of business and clerical workers has continued. Industrial members were reported in 1920 to be 23.1 per cent of all members; and in 1930, only 12.6 per cent, although in that year 525 Associations reported doing some industrial work in 4,898 different plants. In two major cities in 1925 and 1927, clerks, office workers and salesmen were found in local surveys to be 37.1 and 41.0 per cent respectively; business proprietors and managers 10.0 and 13.1 per cent; professional men 9.8 and 13.0 per cent; and skilled laborers 17.8 and 16.2 per cent. Unskilled and semiskilled laborers were reported separately in only one of these cities at about 5 per cent. In one smaller industrial city surveyed in 1929, where the industrial population was found to be 69.2 per cent and that devoted to business and commercial activity only 16.2 per cent, 27 per cent of Association members were from the former, and 51 per cent from the latter. In the cities, the Associations were evidently maintaining only marginal relations with the industrial worker.

Although the constituency in the cities remained largely un-

changed, there was marked extension of constituency in certain other directions. Most notable was that in the high-school field, which was approached distinctively through the medium of the Hi-Y club type of organization. In 1920, a total of 1,213 such clubs was registered, with a total membership of 38,034. At the close of the calendar year 1937, 6,524 such clubs were reported, with a total membership of 167,841.

Most notable of all, however, was the changed attitude that has brought into the membership and activity of the Y.M.C.A.'s an increasing number of women and girl members. Local Associations had begun some years earlier to include these in activity programs, particu-

TABLE XXII  
Y.M.C.A.—Y.W.C.A. CO-OPERATIVE RELATIONSHIPS IN 1930

AREAS OF RELATIONSHIP	ASSOCIATIONS REPORTING CO-OPERATION		ASSOCIATIONS REPORTING WORK FOR OPPOSITE SEX	
	Y.M.C.A.	Y.W.C.A.	Y.M.C.A.	Y.W.C.A.
Activities . . . . .	380	340	542	173
Physical Equipment . . . .	250	233	119	45
Leadership and Control . . . .	149	136	240	19
Finance . . . . .	48	48	197	9
			Y.M.C.A.	Y.W.C.A.
Units Reporting Co-operation . . . . .			455	397
Units Reporting Work for the Opposite Sex . . . . .			586	187

larly in communities without local Y.W.C.A.'s. In 1934 for the first time Associations were given opportunity to report such members nationally. A total of 57,458 were so reported by 275 Associations. A total of 86,610 was reported by 440 Associations in 1937. The proportion is approximately 6 per cent. Obviously a major question of policy was involved in this type of extension. Apart from the single aspect of membership, the question involved the extent to which it was sound community and organization policy for the Y.M.C.A. to undertake activity programs among women and girls. What would the effect of such programs be upon local and broader relations with the Y.W.C.A.? These problems led to agreement between the National Board Y.W.C.A. and National Council Y.M.C.A. to sponsor a Foundation study of this problem.

This study was completed in 1930. It was known as the "Reconnaissance Study of Y.M.C.A.-Y.W.C.A. Relations in the Field" (130). Its director was Professor Herbert N. Shenton. Its inquiries covered 94.8 and 95.5 per cent, respectively, of the Y.M.C.A.'s and Y.W.C.A.'s of the country. It was conceived as a study of "co-operation" rather than "competition." It distinguished between "co-operation" and "work for the opposite sex" in terms of four principal categories, as shown in Table XXII.

The report stated, "It is significant that one-half of the Y.M.C.A.'s report co-operation with the Y.W.C.A.'s while almost two-thirds report work for women. In the Y.W.C.A.'s on the other hand, four-fifths of the units report co-operation, and somewhat more than one-third report work for men. Taken at face value, these figures indicate that the Y.M.C.A. has devoted more effort to its own work for women than to co-operation with the Y.W.C.A. The Y.W.C.A., on the other hand, participates largely in co-operative ventures and devotes only incidental effort to work for men." The report indicated that the economic factor was present to noticeable extent in the desire of local Y.M.C.A.'s to broaden their constituencies, though how far this might be regarded as offset by demands in the local community could not be determined.

In 1934 a further attempt was made on the basis of a new study, to determine whether the trend toward such enlargement of constituency and program contact was increasing (117, 1934, p. 36ff.). The number of Associations reporting *jointly-planned co-operative activities* had declined 5.9 per cent (in a sampling of 308 Associations), but a gain of 9.1 per cent was reported by these Associations in "*separate work among women and girls constituency*" (including some centers where no Y.M.C.A. exists). A special study by the Chicago Y.M.C.A. was undertaken in 1936 for guidance of the administration of its "women's department." Associations were asked to indicate their "dominant reason" for engaging in such work, with the following results. Fifty Associations responded to this inquiry, of which 14 either carried on no work for women and girls or did so in conjunction with the Y.W.C.A. Thirty-six Associations reported the following "reasons," among other items detailing the use of physical facilities, leadership provision, schedules, membership regulations and charges, etc.

Strengthens financial policy.....	10.3%
Increases service to community.....	36.3
Belief in joint work.....	33.2
Service demanded by women, etc.....	20.2
	_____
	100.0

Related to this development, though somewhat independent of it, was the recognition of women as regular Y.M.C.A. secretaries through formal legislative action in 1933 (by the Association of Secretaries) and 1934 (by the National Council). In 1938 there were 53 such secretaries, chiefly but not wholly related to programs among women and girl constituencies.

It is too soon to know how far this extension of Y.M.C.A. services among women and girls represents a permanent adjustment of policy. The recent trend is clear. Apparently it might prove difficult to reverse it. Both the Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A. national bodies recognize its significance; but neither presumes to, or is able to, invade the local com-

munity where the natural mingling of young people and family unit activities are under way. It remains to be seen how far Y.M.C.A. services and relationships will prove suited to the growing interest of women in making their own distinctive contribution in the life of community and nation. It does not seem at all likely that they will become more than a minority, and thus unequal, element of the Y.M.C.A. constituency. If and when that constituency desires and attains fuller representative control, new problems of relationship may arise. There seems as yet to be little evidence of interest in the merging of Associations into a single community organization. Co-operation represents the prevailing method of reconciling these interests, but practical difficulties are met in local community attitudes.

### III. MODIFICATIONS OF METHOD AND EMPHASIS

The conception of the fourfold program, which had lain at the base of the departmental development and its essential institutionalism, continued to exert a powerful influence upon Association outlook and method after the World War. Once these physical, educational, social, and religious programs had become established under separate staff and building arrangements, the entire national organization reflected them. Their differences were more often stressed than their interdependence and their need for integration. Few Association leaders understood the integration of personality. Unco-ordinated services on a segmented basis were extended without hesitation (p. 237).

The first post-war International Convention, in 1919, authorized "the appointment of a commission to prepare a standard all-round program of men's work for the guidance of the Associations." A similar recommendation arose from the Association of Employed Officers in 1923. Impressed by the work done in the War and otherwise with formal testing of individual ability, the commission proposed to the next national secretarial meeting in 1924: (1) a plan for "analysis of individual members as a basis for their all-round development and for the inductive building of program"; and at the same time (2) a plan for the "self-analysis of an Association." For the former were recommended the physical examination, a general measure of mental ability, a standard interview plan, and a self-measuring scale. These suggestions reflected views then prevailing about the recently popularized testing procedures in education and industry. They seemed to imply that the Associations would find it feasible to "individualize" their contacts with members on a basis of fundamental counseling and guidance. This hope was never largely realized. Study of group activity was mentioned by the commission but not developed. The second aspect of the commission report provided a "rating chart" for Associations, in which 57 items with assigned weights were combined in a scoring plan. These items dealt with organization, equipment, business

administration, staff, program, and community relationships. Plainly the plan was intended to increase the efficiency of the local Association, and to furnish a basis for judging the comparative adequacy of work done. Appreciating the difficulty of fixing quantitative standards or norms for such items, the commission set out five principles that might have become potent if their full implications had become fully understood and applied:

1. Each Association should develop its own program in accordance with the ascertained needs and capacities of its constituency.
2. The fundamental purpose of the Association is to discover and help satisfy the needs, and to provide outlet for the capacities of young men in all the functions of their personality, in accordance with the spirit and teaching of Jesus Christ. These functions may be designated as family, civic, economic, intellectual, recreative, athletic, and religious.
3. Every element in a program should be evaluated and devised with reference to its contribution to the promotion of Christian character in men and boys.
4. The Association should develop and carry out its programs in harmony with the purposes and programs of the Christian churches, the Y.W.C.A., and other constructive forces of the community which have a similar purpose.
5. The developing and carrying out of the program should be shared in by the entire membership (*132*, p. 13).

These principles symbolized in 1924 the transition of Association thought from the rigid departmental approach toward appreciation of the unity of personality. Their application, however, was met on every hand by relatively fixed conceptions, equipments, and organization patterns. Characteristic of the ferment of discussion and adjustment of this period were various outline studies prepared for local staff study by Urice (*142*) and Super (*138*). The latter also presented two statements of Association philosophy and achievement that were influential (*137* and *139*).

In 1925, the third national Assembly of Y.M.C.A. Workers with Boys was held at Estes Park, Colorado. Among its leaders was Professor William H. Kilpatrick, of Teachers College. His already widely known interpretations of the fundamental insights of educational philosophy and method enunciated in the work of John Dewey fell on ready soil. Through these contacts and other writings and discussions of Dr. Kilpatrick, Harrison Elliott, and others, Association workers began to think in terms of newer educational conceptions. Among those which seemed to be emphasized in the Estes Park Assembly were

- the decline of the standardized program.
- the use of methods of leadership that grant initiative to boys in club work, camping, etc.

- recognition of religious values in every activity of life.
- emphasis upon the solution of life problems, with Bible study a help rather than an aim.
- Christian decisions possible in every situation in life.
- recognition of the values to be found in the use of existing social group units (121, p. 8).

It was not surprising, therefore, that when the next triennial meeting of the Association of Employed Officers took place in 1927, they should have concentrated their attention upon "The Y.M.C.A. as a Christian Educational Movement." They sought to review the entire field of familiar program practices for their *educational* significance. They accepted that their task was perhaps educational before it could be successfully evangelistic. Many could not and still cannot reconcile these different aspects. They interpreted the newer interest in the "educational approach" as a fundamental failure to keep faith with the historic evangelistic purposes of the Movement. At this pivotal event in 1927, discussions were held on three main subjects:

What is involved in the Christian Educational point of view for our program in its intellectual, social, health, and spiritual aspects?

What is involved in the Christian Educational point of view for our membership practices?

How does the Christian Educational point of view affect the type of ability and training required of employed officers?

The bearing of this educational emphasis has been evident in almost every aspect of Association work in the past decade. Some of the more highly specialized sections of the Movement, it is true, have continued their characteristic types of activity. Yet even there one may find traces of the developmental aim. For example, secretaries in army and navy service sought through special training institutes to master the modern points of view of educational psychology. Supervisory staff secretaries of the older school were obliged to concentrate their efforts upon purely administrative problems, where they felt more at home. Younger secretaries eagerly sought fundamental training in these fields of study. Gradually also the possibilities of informal types of program came to the fore. In the physical field, as against the formal gymnasium class (128), freer types of games and recreational play are advocated not, however, to the exclusion of the older type of work (126). Information educational work, forums, discussion groups of many kinds, have come to supplement the regular class work. The latter, where carried on, exhibits improved standards under able faculties and increasing academic recognition (143). The typical program announcements of representative Associations continue to show great variety of activity. But the rediscovered principle of the unity of the person provides a long-missing basis for integration of what is done

in terms of *each* person. Naturally, many Associations have not yet fully realized their opportunity so to integrate their services.

With the advent of each new program idea, there have been many ready to experiment with it. For example, Association groups are springing up because, through the medium of radio, they are able to hear and later to discuss authoritative interpretations of many of the most urgent questions of the day. A considerable discussion group interest has grown up around the "Town Meeting" radio broadcasts. As an instance of adult citizenship education, this new development has large possibilities.

Character education has itself become a highly professionalized field of study and experimentation. The Character Education Inquiry (48) revealed the unitary and specific aspects in moral behavior, and the difficulty with which conventional programs in church, school, or social agency may be made to contribute to socially approved character traits.

The most characteristic method of work among the Associations from the earliest years was the use of group activity. Whether as fellowship groups or Bible study groups, the early Associations embodied the essential character of the voluntary association. The magnifying of formal class work, in later years, did not preclude the securing of many group values. Some gym and team groups excelled in this respect. Characteristically, however, the club type of group, and the special-interest group, have come rapidly forward as affording surpassing opportunity for significant character formation, granted effective leadership. This recognition, and experiments by which groups were formed in residential neighborhoods without reference to use of a central building, have projected the Associations, particularly in the boys' work area, into one of their greatest opportunities. The rapid extension of group activity in recent years represents this wider approach to the community. Many other organizations were either founded upon such use of group methods, or have adapted their programs to include them.

The emergence of "Group Work" as a major method, paralleling to the older concept of "Case Work" as the central field of social work, has become of considerable importance for the organization as well as its professional staff. The Y.M.C.A. is now widely regarded as a "group work agency." Many fear that this designation will tend to underemphasize the long-established individual contacts that prevail in all Associations. The technical question of what is demanded of professional workers in training and specialization may be deferred for the moment. Many feel that this newest emphasis, "Group Work," has already displaced the conception of the Association as a "Christian Educational Movement"; just as that characterization, some time before, seemed to some to have superseded the concept of a "religious

movement." There is, doubtless, both truth and error in each of these characterizations. They do, however, indicate that adjustment has been taking place (59).

#### IV. CLARIFICATION OF AIMS

The processes by which members of groups composing a great association participate in the formulation of their corporate aims are very complex. Back of the deliberations of formal assemblies lie more subtle emotional habit patterns that rarely become apparent. These may help to explain the potency of old formulations such as the "Portland Test," the influence of which went far beyond the acceptability of its text.

The Portland Convention action of 1869 dominated Association thought and policy for fully sixty years (pp. 235 and 265). The simple statements of purpose and recognition adopted in 1931 and 1933 present a striking contrast:

PORTLAND, 1869

**RESOLVED**, that as these organizations bear the name of Christian and profess to be engaged directly in the Savior's service, so it is clearly their duty to maintain the control and management of all their affairs in the hands of those who profess to love and publicly avow their faith in Jesus, the Redeemer, as Divine, and who testify their faith of becoming and remaining members of churches held to be Evangelical. And we hold those churches to be Evangelical which, maintaining the Holy Scriptures to be the only infallible rule of faith and practice, do believe in the Lord Jesus Christ (the only begotten of the Father, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords in whom dwelleth the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and who was made sin for us, though knowing no sin, bearing our sins in His own body on the tree) as the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved from everlasting punishment.

**RESOLVED**, that the Associations organized after this date shall be entitled to representation in future conferences of the Associated Y.M.C.A. Associations of North America, upon condition that they be severally composed of young men in communion with Evangelical churches (provided that in places where Associations are formed by a single denomina-

CLEVELAND, 1931

The Young Men's Christian Association we regard as being, in its essential genius, a world-wide fellowship of men and boys united by a common loyalty to Jesus Christ for the purpose of building Christian personality and a Christian society.

[In 1933, the National Council adopted the following:] Each local Association shall determine the qualifications of its voting members, and of the members of its Boards of Control, providing such members be in accord with the purposes, ideals, and spirit of the Young Men's Christian Association (1933, p. 12).

PORTLAND, 1869—*Continued*

tion, members of other denominations are not excluded therefrom), and active membership and the right to hold office be conferred only upon young men who are members in good standing in Evangelical churches (1869, p. 101ff.).

But the official approval of a simplified statement of aims in 1931 did not result in a fresh consensus of purpose, or concentrate the ener-

TABLE XXXIII  
RELIGIOUS WORK—STATISTICS FOR CITY, TOWN, AND RAILROAD ASSOCIATIONS

	1904	1907	1911	1914
Different Students Enrolled in Bible Study.....	34,696	50,182	73,850	101,795
Attendance at Bible Classes.....	488,737	693,864	987,286	1,374,941
Number Associations Holding Shop Meetings.....	121	255	289	314
Attendance Shop Meetings.....	444,657	1,068,754	1,191,386	1,843,187
Total Attendance at All Religious Meetings—City, Town, and Railroad.....	3,717,338	4,632,349	5,486,895	7,003,062
Number of Men and Boys Confessing Christ.....	16,279	19,637	20,549	21,093
Gifts to Missions.....	\$87,249	\$73,849	\$101,152	\$153,823
Religious Work Directors.....	25	64	84	78
Men and Boys Uniting with Churches.....	3,766	5,207	4,969	7,031
Spent for Religious Work.....	\$141,170	\$203,407	\$260,787	\$321,067
Bible Study Examinations Certificates Issued.....	199	974	1,336	2,098
Number of Associations Participating.....	41	79	84	86
Number of Students Participating....	438	2,058	2,690	4,376

gies of leaders or members toward specific goals. Not only did the problem of effectively catching up the convictions and contributions of hundreds of thousands of individuals still exist, but the organizational expression of a religious purpose, simple or complex, presented problems. For example, the waning of departmentalism had weakened the former Religious Work Department, the national staff of which had once numbered as many as six specialists. Widely prevailing views were held that the true religious aim of Association work necessarily includes the whole man; and that such aims were at least implicit in all worthy activities on his behalf. Such views regarding the pervasion of all activities with religious significance were regarded skeptically by many executives. This was to admit some confusion in their own minds as to the reason for conducting activities for which such a claim could not fairly be made. It had been a common concern for many years to consider "The Central Objective of the Association—to what degree it is being attained and how can it be more fully realized?" (133).

At a national meeting of secretaries in 1915, a commission presented what it termed a "statistical analysis," comparing "the several kinds of religious work activities" over a period of years:

The assumption that such items could be counted accurately or compared satisfactorily was increasingly objectionable to Association leaders. So also was the view that such activities were the exclusive locus of religious efforts among youth. The secretarial assemblies of the 1920's increasingly recognized that religious aims could not be dealt with in compartments. Not all were agreed, however, with the prevalent trend. A special Commission on Message and Purpose, authorized to identify and seek religious values through specific organization and programs, also insisted upon having a designated national staff executive for advocacy and leadership. The Commission continued until recently, winning some support for its broader religious aims without securing wide agreement that religious aims could be facilitated better by departmental designation or procedures.

Satisfactory clarification of the Movement's aims has not as yet been achieved. The problem lies deeper than legislative formulation. Three comparatively recent attempts to contribute to clarity of Association purpose are worthy of note:

1. *Executives of local Associations* continue to seek, as in 1915, for some formula that will establish the validity of the present very heavy programs in terms of religious value. Few if any voices are now raised merely to "assert" such values. Special attempts have been made to identify religious value, through studies and discussions in current secretarial meetings, based upon reported program projects in local Associations. Some experiments seek to re-examine the nature and criteria of religious quality in the context of direct behavior and experience of youth. In general, however, the approach seems to rely more upon insistence that there *be* religious quality than upon deeper insight into its essential nature. Men speak as if they had long neglected something they should have done, and now mean to retrieve. It reveals a confessional temper, and a return to loyalty. It does not greatly clarify the aims or the steps by which these may be achieved in the midst of complex activity programs that seem likely to continue to dominate all Association expressions.
2. *National Committee reformulations* attempt, without recourse to legislative methods, to gather up what is believed by them to represent the prevailing mind of the Associations as to philosophy and aims. Such a formulation was prepared under the sponsorship of the national Program Services Committee of the National Council in 1936. It covers a broad field, yet attempts to particularize the two concepts "developing Christian personality" and "building a Christian society" in such way that the appropriate methods of work and the spirit of community relationships become definite parts of the objective. This formulation was not derived from a fresh survey of member attitudes or

local Association views. Yet it gathers up, by means of a carefully planned discussion process, what may be considered as a fairly authoritative summary of the thinking of the present-day Association Movement. For its significant reference value, the statement is offered in full.

### WHAT IS THE YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION?

The Program Services Committee of the National Council frequently receives requests for a statement of the objectives and characteristics of the Young Men's Christian Association. There appears to be a need for a general statement in harmony with present practice that can be used as a guide in policy making and program planning both by local Associations and by the Movement as a whole. The following attempt to state the philosophy implicit in good Association practice by three leaders of the life and thought of the Association Movement is offered for discussion and criticism.

### DISTINCTIVE OBJECTIVES AND CHARACTERISTICS

The Young Men's Christian Association we regard as being in its essential genius a world-wide fellowship of men and boys, united by a common loyalty to Jesus, for the purpose of developing Christian personality and building a Christian society.

#### *I. Developing Christian Personality*

The first Young Men's Christian Association was formed by a group of young men, who worked and lived together, for mutual helpfulness in maintaining Christian standards and growing in Christian experience in the face of their working and living conditions. What characterized the first Association group has been distinctive of the Y.M.C.A. throughout its development. It provides a medium for mutual helpfulness in Christian living to boys and to young and older men, where they live, attend school, work, or spend their leisure time. It seeks to enlist boys and men in the Christian life and to lead them to avail themselves of the opportunities it offers for the development of Christian experience.

To these ends Association work at its best provides:

1. *Groups* around school, vocational, neighborhood, friendship, leisure-time, and other social relations that furnish a medium for mutual helpfulness to boys and men in their everyday lives.
2. *A group program, leadership, and methodology* through which boys and men
  - may find opportunity for a group fellowship through which they can help one another in personal problems and can reinforce one another's ideals and purposes and in which they may share and discuss experience in meeting their life situations.
  - may live co-operatively rather than competitively amid the consequences of the competitive struggle so common in our modern world.
  - may be challenged through the study of the Bible and of the writings of others in the nineteen centuries of Christian experience to explore the meaning of the Christian religion and its applicability to one's own life, and through prayer and worship use its resources in facing personal problems.
  - may have opportunity to enrich their lives in areas of need or interest.
  - may obtain counsel from a leader or other competent individuals on their intimate personal problems, thus becoming happier and more skilful in their work, recreation, social, and religious life.

3. *Service buildings* providing wholesome living, eating, and recreational conditions for young and older men away from home or in the community. These centers are located near neighborhood, work, or school relationships, at railroad junction and lay-over points, important shore-leave ports for the navy, near army posts, industrial plants, and in student communities.
4. *Service to individuals* where there is need or strain in their living, school, work, or leisure-time relations. Counsel is made available to boys and men on personal difficulties, putting them in touch with experts where needed, helping them to make satisfactory church, social, and other connections in strange communities, aiding them in vocational choice and placement, and helping them to find the resources of the Christian religion. Healthful physical exercise is provided. Courses of study are offered, suited in content and method to individual needs in order that younger and older men may improve their vocational status through proper training, and that individuals may enrich their lives in fields that they have not had previous opportunity to explore.

## *II. Building a Christian Society*

Although the Association started as an agency for personal helpfulness, more recently it has come to recognize the close interrelation of personal and social problems. Personal problems can be successfully solved only in a society that respects personal values. Further, the Christian gospel implies both the sacredness of individual personality and the necessity of a society based on sacredness of individual personality, wherein people live together co-operatively in the spirit of good will. Consequently, the Association work seeks to enlist its functional groups in such group and intergroup programs as to:

1. Stimulate competent, constructive, independent thinking and action both on personal problems and on economic, political, interracial, and other issues.
2. Challenge men to explore the meaning of Christian principles and of the gospel, and bring them to feel and understand the tension between life as it is and as it would be if the Christian ideals operated more fully in our economic, political, business, interracial and national affairs.
3. Encourage groups to remake on the Christian pattern the life of which they are a part.
4. Encourage co-operation by dissenting groups or minorities within groups with those of like mind in the community to put into effect their varying Christian convictions.
5. Bring about through such activities a fellowship characterized by understanding and friendship, in which boys and men shall work together positively and constructively to transform the contemporary life of which they are a part.

## METHODS OF WORK

The methods of Association work at its best are consistent with its Christian emphasis and objectives, because of the conviction that Christian goals cannot be achieved by un-Christian methods. At the same time, full use is made of the best insights as to effective methods growing out of psychology, mental hygiene, education, and sociology because of the conviction that only as Association leaders meet the conditions that modify individual character can they be effective co-workers with God. The Association seeks to demonstrate the democratic and co-operative ideals that it espouses for society. To this end it attempts:

1. To give all members an opportunity to share in planning and managing the activities in which they are directly engaged.
2. To be democratic in organization and management, that all members may participate in its policies.
3. To provide a fellowship in which not only the strong may find avenues of expression, but in which the weak may find such sympathetic understanding that they may grow strong.

#### COMMUNITY CO-OPERATION

The Association is one of many community agencies that seek to help individuals and to aid in social reconstruction. Related on one hand to social agencies, on another to religious agencies, and where they are found, to Community Councils, it works co-operatively rather than competitively to achieve the aims which these character-building and social agencies have in common, and at the same time to add its own distinctive contribution to the work. It finds its closest fellowship with agencies sensitive to personal values and spiritual in their interpretation of life. On any community problems, it helps individuals or groups within the Association to work with those in other similar agencies to achieve their common goals. This means that it often finds itself co-operating with other groups for a special purpose even though it may not be in sympathy with all the purposes of the agencies with which it co-operates. In such co-operative work it seeks to lead its own constituency to an understanding and tolerance that keep them from labeling other groups and opposing them *in toto*, but rather encourage comparison of principles and objectives that will bring about understanding of likeness and difference and enable each to share with the other those convictions of most concern.

In the community pattern it seeks to determine and understand its distinctive function and contribution. To this end it finds a community survey of conditions and agencies important. Other institutions carry on certain activities characteristic of the Association; other agencies share certain of its convictions and emphases; some organizations follow its social groupings. The distinctive function and contribution of the Association are its particular combination or pattern of these characteristics.

1. It seeks to fulfil the needs of individuals or groups in their daily life, school, work, or leisure, as compared with some agencies having specifically educational or remedial functions.
2. Its basic organization is in selective social groups as compared with public agencies serving all, such as the school.
3. It is a preventive and educational agency as compared with corrective agencies. Its primary purpose is not to cure disease but to keep boys and men physically fit; not to deal with delinquency directly but to get at the source of delinquency in individuals and communities and to build the kind of character and morale that can withstand the temptations to delinquency.
4. It is an interracial, interclass agency as compared with those appealing to only one race or group, such as Negro, labor, and other groups. The Association seeks to offer a unique medium through which boys and young and older men, coming from widely different groups (e.g., different economic levels, different levels of maturity, different degrees of educational advantage) can unite in a new kind of brotherhood hitherto not experienced by them.
5. It is primarily an organization of boys and men, dealing with their dis-

tinctive problems, in contrast to agencies formed on a family basis, as is the Church.

6. It is a Christian agency as compared with those whose distinctive emphasis is on character development or some other type of religious emphasis. Although it welcomes within its groups members of other religions or of no religious affiliation who are in sympathy with its purposes, the Association believes that the most significant measure of human values is to be found in Christianity; that the "C" in the Y.M.C.A. stands for a particular quality of young men's Associations which is more than philanthropic or secular; that it is a Christian Association. Although not committed to any specific creedal or social interpretation of Christianity, the Movement is nevertheless devoted to such experimentation in personal and social living as may be carried on within the framework that we know as Christian.
7. It is an interdenominational fellowship, as compared with the distinctive approaches of various communions.

The Association, therefore, clearly realizes that its best contribution in any community or nation is made as it confines its work to the groupings and program in line with its distinctive functions. It cannot minister to the whole community, because it cannot be "all things to all men"; nor provide what all sorts of tastes may desire or demand. In that sense it is and must continue to be a minority group in our society—one of many agencies in the community.

It does feel, however, that because it deals with the needs and relationships of boys and men at strategic points of their living, school, work, and leisure-time conditions, because it offers facilities to social groups and service to needy individuals, because it is a voluntary and private agency, because it is doing preventive and educational work, because it is Christian in its emphasis and purpose, it has a distinctive and worthy function in community and national life.

HARRISON S. ELLIOTT  
LAWRENCE K. HALL  
ROBERT SENECA SMITH

3. *Member interests and attitudes* constitute the foundation elements of whatever the Movement's aims may be at any given time. Such members are chosen to representative rôles, occasionally by genuinely democratic processes. In clubs and activity groups, self-government and skilful guidance result in a fairly logical expression of the group concerns (50). State, regional, and national assemblies of older boys and young men, such as the National Hi-Y Congress at Berea, Kentucky in 1936, the Third National Young Men's Assembly in 1937, and the National Council of Student Associations for many years (p. 138) illustrate a recognition and process which must be extended into the national and other field occasions where the broader policies of the Association are finally determined. As "consumers" and purchasers of Association services, undoubtedly actual demand as expressed in modern building structures and activity programs may have a certain index value. Scientific study of the continuity of membership (there has been a high turnover rate), and of the holding power of activities has not reached a point where the results give a clear view of prevailing and fairly constant aims among members. Many studies

of member interests have been made, some of which do not reveal high correlation between indicated interests and related program events. Needs may not closely follow interests. Individualized contacts among the members are, unfortunately, too informal and meager to reveal the typical bearing of what the member needs or thinks upon what the Association or the Movement does (136). A number of groups of young members called "Committees of Twelve" were formed in many local Associations to make articulate their own views about "Youth in the Next Decade" (144). The report of these Committees indicated clearly that they regarded their Association relationship as a means of more competent thinking and action in the field of personal development and worthy social citizenship. No area of the present-day life remained untouched. Like other youth groups of the present day, these typical young members understood the Association to be simply themselves in associative effort toward commonly held Christian objectives. These were not always clear. They sought, by such fellowship and inquiry, to make them clearer. Such realism has found expression through such bodies as the National Young Men's Assembly. In their third meeting in 1937 (this is a relatively new Association grouping) they suggested attention to the following points in working toward general policies affecting young men's activity and relationships in the Y.M.C.A.:

- (a) Election of more men under thirty to boards and general planning committees of "Y's."
- (b) Provision for all forms of activity to have direct or indirect representation in administrative or program planning councils or committees.
- (c) Provision for a variety of forms of group life: fellowship groups, such as Phalanx; interest groups, such as glee clubs, craft clubs, social problem clubs, etc.; responsibility groups, such as councils and committees; and activities for individuals not related to organized groups.
- (d) Formation of more groups for young men and young women together—not only for study of marriage and family life, but for many other forms of religious, cultural, and recreational interest.
- (e) Provision of individual and group guidance opportunities, in co-operation where possible with schools, churches, NYA, U. S. Employment Service, and other community groups.
- (f) Provision of opportunities for study of current community, national, and social problems.
- (g) Provision for study of the problems facing and the claims of Christianity today.

Clarification of aims, so far as this can be accomplished, cannot come wholly from within any organization or group. Confusion or

lack of clarity in the culture itself means that the position of social and religious thought in America must itself be reflected in what any particular group or constituency may feel at a given time. In some instances, the Association may move ahead of the prevailing trend, as it did a generation ago in publishing the writings of Fosdick as a contribution to liberal religious thought. In general, however, the Association appears more likely to follow than to lead the way. The Associations unite members from every denominational background, and thus comprehend the most varied religious teaching. One may not say whether the practical contacts of the Association's program will serve to compose from such diversity a vital common ground of belief and purpose. It is asserted, with some justice, that participation in Association experiences helps to create a practical basis for Christian union. From this contact it is conceivable that some fresh summation of the interests of Association constituency may be accomplished. If it came from them in authentic manner, it would reflect the realism of youth, and involve the social maladjustment of the times. It would have a new validity, because it was what it assumed to be: an authentic composite of what a particular association of young Christians believed important and meant to do.

#### V. BUILDING TRENDS SINCE 1920

Chart II, on page 124, shows a distribution of 717 buildings in 1936 by year of erection. From it may be noted that, from 1920 to about 1930, there occurred a building construction period second only to that following 1900. The Associations, concentrated in the rapidly growing American cities, made great efforts to keep pace and to establish the Association in physical structures worthy of its position in the community.

With the increasing size of communities and the adoption of a "metropolitan" form of organization with branches in neighborhood areas of larger cities, some cities conducted local building campaigns with objectives reaching many millions of dollars. St. Louis raised 3 millions of dollars for such purposes in 1924. Detroit in 1925 raised 5 millions. One donor gave \$750,000 in this campaign for the erection of a single building. The demand grew for buildings with more space, more varied and better facilities, and hence with a larger investment per building. In the chart referred to, the actual building investment after 1920 passed all previous records. In the final years before the depression of 1929, amounts annually spent exceeded 9, 11, and 12 millions of dollars. The aggregate property of the American Associations reached an investment of 250 millions in 1929.

Apart from the heavy demand upon lay ability and secretarial time that the operation of these modern buildings required, it soon became apparent that a major problem was involved in keeping them respon-

sive to changing program needs. There were also the problems of repair, renovation, and of obsolescence. It had been estimated by competent technical authority that the word "modern" might be applied only to buildings erected within one decade; the word "recent" those in service from eleven to twenty years; while those between twenty and thirty years would require considerable modification, redecoration, and re-equipment. Those used over thirty years were usually considered obsolete (117, 1936, p. 48). In 1936 the age of buildings in use was as follows:

10 years old or less.....	21.6%
11 to 20 years old.....	21.9
21 to 30 years old.....	40.3
Over 30 years old.....	16.2
	<hr/>
	100.0

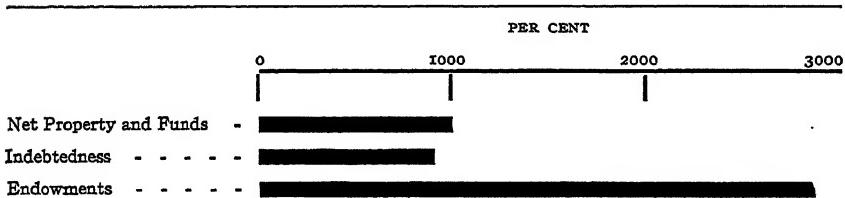
It was apparent that the Associations were here facing a serious situation. The problem involved not only suitability to new program requirements. Lack of attractiveness and neglected repair or renovation during the recent depression had resulted in lowered dormitory occupancy and other loss of income. Accordingly, Associations began to experiment, with the aid of the Building and Furnishings Service (formerly the Building Bureau) of the National Council in redecorating and otherwise modernizing their equipments. Results exceeded expectations. Newly finished rooms proved attractive even under depression conditions. Occupancy ratios improved. Space adjustments were made to provide better facilities for both income-producing features and general program projects. The modern "health club" developed large patronage, with its equipment designed especially for the needs of business men, who were glad to pay substantial fees for this new help in keeping fit.

Even the newest buildings were found to require constant restudy to adapt their plans and space to new requirements. Since such adjustments usually required considerable expenditure, it proved easy to delay them. As a result, it was found that even the modern building was to some degree a retarding factor in adjusting the Association's program services to changing needs. Association programs operating entirely or largely without buildings, were apparently somewhat freer to adjust what they were doing among groups. Yet these were without some of the supporting facilities available for similar programs in or near the typical modern building. The executive task, in this regard, came to require astute discrimination as between smooth, solvent operation on the crest of a continued demand for particular services, and emerging needs of perhaps different constituencies for which demand had not as yet become articulate. The influence of even the best-adapted equipments and buildings serves to channel certain demands of particular groups in the community. Such equipments may restrict

or divert the possibility of contact with other constituencies that are the more logical field for Association effort. Some Association leaders have come to feel that, in this regard, the building influence, although useful expression of the Association's method and purpose, has cost it dearly at the point of sensitivity to changing needs of youth; and that it has preoccupied a large part of staff energies that might better have gone into direct services among youth.

Later reference will be made to the problem of debt on buildings, which has accompanied all periods of building expansion. Such indebtedness afflicts the entire program. The unavoidable interest burden becomes a preferred charge on current budgets. Its amortization is a

CHART IV  
INCREASE IN CERTAIN FINANCIAL ITEMS  
1900—1936



relatively heavier problem as rapid obsolescence takes place. Despite policies advocated to the contrary, the business men in local boards of directors were willing, in times of great business prosperity, to build beyond their immediate resources. They often committed their Associations to highly institutionalized structures under conditions that tended to retard adaptiveness (p. 252).

## VI. THE FINANCIAL BASE

Partly, but not wholly, because of the building movement, the Associations became possessors by 1936 of net property and funds valued in excess of 200 millions of dollars. Chart IV indicates that this was an increase of 1070.6 per cent over the position in 1900. During this time, debt had also risen 988.0 per cent, to more than 45 millions; and represented 22.1 per cent of all net property.

During the period since 1900, endowment funds had been created aggregating \$30,116,100. This was 2726.5 per cent beyond the 1900 level. The Associations had become wealthy. They were engaged in programs requiring the annual expenditure of as much as 60 millions in 1930. This declined 42.2 per cent to just over 35 millions in 1934, and returned to \$39,477,300 in 1936.

It had never been held that Association work in any community could be entirely self-supporting. It was not considered feasible that

members and users should pay in fees the entire cost of current operations. The extent to which additional contributions were required from the community since 1920 may be seen from Table XXIV.

These percentages are based upon aggregates reported for both items by a slightly varying number of Associations year by year. They appear to indicate a definite trend toward increase in such contributions during the economically favorable years preceding the depression of 1929. This type of support was either somewhat self-limited, or less needed, during the more recent years. In any case, however, the need to seek anywhere from 8 to 16 millions in outright contributions each

TABLE XXIV  
PROPORTION OF CURRENT INCOME FROM CONTRIBUTIONS  
1920—1937

1920.....	22.5%	1929.....	26.9%
1921.....	23.5	1930.....	26.6
1922.....	24.4	1931.....	25.2
1923.....	25.4	1932.....	24.2
1924.....	25.6	1933.....	26.5
1925.....	26.0	1934.....	23.4
1926.....	27.1	1935.....	22.1
1927.....	28.3	1936.....	21.9
1928.....	27.6	1937.....	21.8

year from friends of the Association in the community sharpened the problem of support for such agencies in all communities. It led to renewed discussion as to whether members, users, and participants should not themselves more nearly meet the cost of services provided. The experience of private colleges and other institutions was cited to show that this was not practicable. Many felt, also, that such an annual appeal was in itself a wholesome necessity. Based on conviction about the value of services rendered among community youth, it was equal, they said, to a vote of confidence.

A broad relationship between Y.M.C.A. income and the general business trend has been observed. In fifty Associations, the operating data of which have been studied monthly since 1929, the index numbers for current income (computed on the basis of running totals) reached a low point of 62.5 in 1935—a decline of 37.5 per cent, as compared with a decline of about 45 points shown by the Index of Business Activity published by the *Annalist* (financial publication of the *New York Times*, January 21, 1938). Association financial operations usually reflect business cycles, though with a lag, and usually to a somewhat less degree. This somewhat greater stability may be due in part to the devoted interest shown by contributing friends even when economic conditions are unfavorable.

The contributing Associations discriminated sharply among obliga-

tions. On page 148 it was shown that, from 1930 to 1935, the local Associations suffered less reduction for their own work than did other Association agencies. On the basis of a 1925-1929 average as 100, local Association contribution receipts declined to 64.1 per cent only. Contribution receipts to what are called "Domestic Services"—that is, the work carried on directly under the National Council in the United States—fell to 38.7 per cent of the average; while contributions to the Foreign Services fell to 22.4 per cent. On the basis of the same average as 100, these contributions had risen in 1927 to more than 2 millions of dollars for the year, or 109.4 per cent. Such assumed obligations proved

TABLE XXV  
AGENCY TURNOVER IN 86 COMMUNITY CHESTS IN 1934, 1935, AND 1936

SIZE OF CHEST (BY AMOUNT RAISED)	NUMBER OF CHESTS	FORMER AGENCIES OUT EACH YEAR			CHEST AGENCIES NEW FOR EACH YEAR			MERGERS TAKING PLACE EACH YEAR		
		1934	1935	1936	1934	1935	1936	1934	1935	1936
\$500,000 and over...	18	2	14	12	..	58*	24*	1	1	1
200,000—499,999...	15	..	3	6	..	3	14	1	1	1
100,000—199,999...	28	3	4	7	4	6	20	1	2	2
50,000—99,999...	11	..	1	6	..	3	7	1	..	..
Total.....	86	5	24	37	5	75*	76*	4	5	7

\*The Chicago Fund added 52 agencies for 1935 and 13 for 1936.

very vulnerable under extreme depression conditions, and the policies represented had to come under sharp review.

The rise of Community Chests following the World War (there had been numerous earlier local beginnings) introduced a new feature into the financing of many Young Men's Christian Associations. The results of community fund-raising campaigns before, and especially during, the World War had led community leaders to see that considerable overlapping existed between programs of independent agencies. Increased costs resulted, as well as inadequate coverage of certain social needs. Many felt that there was no method short of public control and taxation by which in any given community a comprehensive co-ordination of such efforts could be assured. Views of existing organizations differed widely, as did those within the Y.M.C.A. itself. The number of local cities having some form of community fund or chest is approximately 250 at the present time. The number of agencies changes constantly. The national organization for this movement, Community Chests and Councils, Inc., published a report showing agency turnover for 1934-1936 as shown in Table XXV (10).

Some agencies, including occasional Y.M.C.A.'s, enter and leave the local Chest organization each year. The number of participating Y.M.C.A.'s remains between 230 and 240. The proportion of local Association budgets provided through Chest participation ranged between 25.4 and 27.0 per cent from 1934 to 1936. It slightly exceeds the general "contribution" item in the budgets of other Y.M.C.A.'s. Re-

peated studies of the experience of Associations participating and non-participating (*123* and *131*) indicates that participation usually does not tend to lessen current resources in normal times, despite instances to the contrary, though it does limit the cultivation of a direct supporting constituency.

Behind such efforts to develop a common community approach to the financing of social work lie many assumptions that need examination not possible here. Among these are the view that givers will give more to many diverse enterprises than to a few in which they have special interest; the view that they will give more at a single time, on an annual or budget basis, than on occasion; the view that they will give more intelligently if the objects of giving have been investigated and audited by a central body; the view that the individual giver desires and will co-operate fully with wider planning for the meeting of community need. The actual amount of expenditure by an Association is likely to be determined by such factors as

1. The character and cost of maintenance in good condition of a service building, with its variations of income according to patronage, relative emphasis upon various program specializations, existing practices regarding charges and rates, selection of constituency, etc.
2. The general economic condition of the community and the country as a whole, with relatively high degree of correspondence between business "prosperity" and the availability of income for maintenance and expansion of programs.
3. The nature and extent of community organization, whether purely for financing or planning or both, and the policies and attitudes which Associations have developed regarding co-operation in such efforts.

The Associations, since the World War, have been confronted by all of these problems suggested above. Because of these and related conditions, Associations have not as yet been able to find a basis upon which to forecast or control income. They have continued to rely mainly upon the operations of their physical plant (always as non-profit agencies), and to a lesser degree upon the contributions from the interested constituency, to make possible the work they attempt to do. To many Associations, a pooled community approach appears precarious, and independent access to community support is preferred (p. 255).

## VII. COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

The experiences of the World War had profoundly affected and changed the American community's conception of welfare services and their support. Many sincerely believed that the united war work campaigns for service programs had set a pattern to be followed in times of

peace. To others, however, the element of coercion was considered highly inappropriate. If the Y.M.C.A. had suffered somewhat by reason of criticism of its services during the war, it had also gained substantially through the discovery of new friends and greatly increased support, interest, and expectation on the part of the existing constituency.

As one of the earliest community agencies working among American youth (p. 225) the Young Men's Christian Associations had both the advantages and disadvantages of a pioneer position. In some instances, they had pre-empted the field, but had not covered it. They had sought contact with all types and classes of young men, but had secured only a limited relationship with certain groups, such as those in industry. The Associations had identified themselves with, but not fully occupied, the field of young men's work; but they had also allowed themselves to appeal to every group in the community life, both sexes, all ages. They had approached the community as a Protestant movement, but had welcomed all religious affiliations into their membership. Indeed, in 1933 the National Council had approved a provision permitting any member Association to determine for itself the conditions of its own membership and board of directors, provided that the latter "be in accord with the purposes, ideals, and spirit of the Young Men's Christian Association" (By-Laws, Article VIII, Section 5).

In these several respects, therefore, the Associations had come to approach the community in a many-sided and often confusing way. There were few if any distinguishing, characteristic approaches that were generally deemed essential and everywhere observed.

Under these conditions, the appearance of many other organizations sponsoring programs among American youth precipitated a genuine crisis in many communities. The various programs introduced were not in complete harmony. They reflected the sectarian, economic, sectional, or political bias of their sponsors. Some were frankly propagandist in their purposes. Some specialized in the methods of democratic procedure; others based their work upon obedience and rigid discipline. In each community, it was an unavoidable task of citizens to evaluate proposals and programs. Reasonable economy was sought. In times of emergency, conflicts arose between immediate needs for subsistence and developmental programs employing educational methods and requiring longer time for their results. A sense of need for improved standards, better control, and more complete coverage arose.

These problems became acute long before the more direct conflict between private and public agency programs arose out of the 1929 depression. Yet the search for better co-ordination was well advanced among private agencies long before that time. The Community Chest movement, which had begun some time before, undertook in 1931 to state the philosophy and method of social planning that lay at the foundation of its significant approach to the community. It recognized

its basis in the unique nature of private social work organization. It conceived private agencies as different from public social agencies, on the one hand, and from proprietary social agencies, such as private hospitals owned by a physician, on the other. "Private social agencies occupy a middle ground. They find their legal basis in provision by the state for granting a corporate franchise to a group of individuals, authorizing joint effort in behalf of public welfare. They derive their comparative elasticity and freedom of action, as contrasted with governmental bodies, from the more informal nature of their authority and responsibility." Regarding "a social agency as the embodiment of a public trust" as the public regards it, "social work administration is essentially a moral exercise. . . . The psychological elements of a social agency may be stated as a social purpose, a secondary social grouping in the service of that purpose, and the development of skill for its realization." Beyond the usual administrative structure, including the membership, officers, board of directors, and staff "often there is a board of trustees for the holding of property. . . . In the background are to be remembered the financial and in the foreground, the clients. The appropriate social abilities are, in general, those implied in (1) the field of service to clients, (2) the field of social finance, (3) the field of social interpretation, (4) the field of management" (34, p. 6).

Although the Y.M.C.A.'s had many kinds of relationship (as already pointed out), they were everywhere sought to be included as social agencies on the basis of the general pattern suggested. Not all Y.M.C.A.'s accepted the relationship in the beginning, fearing that to do so would in some subtle way weaken the long-standing bond with the Protestant churches, or with the religious traditions of the Movement. But the practical problems of community financing, influenced by the changing moods of public opinion, led for the most part to a realistic course. Councils of Social Agencies were organized in some instances to undertake social-planning aspects of the community problem; but this was usually without reference to the immediate problems of budgeting, money-raising, and allocation. Regardless of the sponsorship, many communities found that the joint money-raising function was the most completely developed. Budgeting and social planning were considered in their infancy. This was true, in the view of the Community Chest organization, because both require a knowledge of

- (a) Objectives—What are the important social results to be sought?
- (b) Practice—Which objectives should come first in point of time and emphasis?
- (c) Standards—What are the effective methods of attaining them?
- (d) Joint planning and joint action—How may those persons who constitute the social agencies be brought to agree in both theory and practice upon those points? (34, p. 22)

The story of the period since the World War is the story of the attempt

of hundreds of American communities to answer these basic questions satisfactorily (67).

The good will accorded the Y.M.C.A.'s in nearly one thousand American communities where they were at work rested, it may be assumed, upon somewhat substantial belief in the values of their programs. Such value was attested to many individually because of contact and participation currently or at some previous time. In a more subtle sense, also, the influence of such participation found its way into broader relationships as individuals interacted as members of still other Associations in the environment. Such close interweaving gave persistence to the relationships, and a sense of independence on the part of leaders. This tended to continue even after the conviction about the need of genuine community co-operation for social welfare had reached the organization stage. Institutional attitudes often discouraged the prospect of putting established objectives and programs of a particular organization at the mercy of some new and as yet ill-defined outline for community well-being. Association leaders were naturally strongly conditioned by their own organizational experience (p. 262). They often found it difficult either to lead or to follow the trend toward co-operative planning for the civic training and character education of youth. More recently, when the Co-ordinating Council movement came into being, many Associations still felt hesitant, especially when the initiative for such organization had been supplied by others. Yet few Associations felt ready in themselves to initiate co-operative community organization. They could not in fairness dominate, and were hesitant to submit their undertakings to the approval of the common mind. Some, however, were ready and able to contribute leadership (65).

The arguments for joint planning, like the basis for equitable allocation of funds from joint financing, rest upon the assumption of common objectives. It may hardly be assumed that the objectives of organizations arising in widely different social contexts can be identical. Some common aims may be assumed, however, especially in regard to such subjects as the avoidance of crime or the positive assertion of citizenship. Some real part of the difficulty of recent years may have been due to the lack of sufficiently clear objectives among the many organizations. It was a judgment of one social student that "it is impossible to assign its proper place in the general community plan to any organization until the objectives, the purposes, and functions of that organization are clearly understood and sincerely carried into action." The problem remains to be solved.

The American communities that helped at the depth of the last depression to provide more than 35 millions of dollars of annual Y.M.C.A. budget expenditure express habits and attitudes too firmly established to be dropped overnight or redirected on short notice to new forms of interest. The Association's own history lives in the

convictions of its members and friends, and yields slowly to newer forms of social collaboration. Views as to the uniqueness of the Association's real aims today may require modification in the face of practical tests; but the achievement of modification is a subtler thing. Some conception of this basic factor in Association thought was phrased by one who had made many exhaustive local surveys of Y.M.C.A. activity in principal cities during the post-war years:

The Young Men's Christian Associations are religious educational organizations ministering to the leisure time of boys and men in ways intended to develop and strengthen in them those attitudes, appreciations, and behaviors which will increase their own happiness and at the same time make their lives more serviceable to society. The extent to which the ideals, beliefs, and standards of Protestant Christianity are definitely taught and the insistence of the effort to win boys and men to a confessed loyalty to Jesus Christ, differ somewhat widely. But the Association has from the beginning been committed to the belief that the attitudes, appreciations, and behaviors most likely to bring individual and social usefulness are those fully in accord with the life and teachings of Jesus (140).

### VIII. RATIONALIZATION OF THE FOREIGN WORK

The expansion of the foreign work after the World War, like the great drive for general Association expansion following 1900, was closely identified with the missionary purpose and world-wide contacts of John R. Mott. It was a part of the out-thrust of the Movement for world evangelization, which had begun at Northfield in 1886. The startling growth of 1414 per cent in Association foreign work expenditures from 1900 to 1919 was but one episode of a program that proposed literally to evangelize the whole world and to make the American Associations primarily an efficient base for this purpose (p. 110).

This whole enterprise won substantial recognition as one of the significant international Christian movements of the time (23). The appeal to the Associations to support this enterprise met with considerable success. For the period up to 1920, the Associations themselves had much desired to be identified with the efforts to secure necessary funds. They were given credit for a little more than half of the sums raised. Individuals had furnished the balance of the money. Intensive solicitation was necessary. A commission led by L. Wilbur Messer returned from a world tour to argue before the International Convention in 1916 for still further extension of this work. Messer regarded the maintenance of a foreign staff totalling two hundred men as a reasonable objective.

The Associations accepted this goal. Contributions and appropriations in 1927 totalled \$2,028,320 for this work. This large sum included, however, the assumption of responsibility for considerable work

in post-war countries of Europe, where services begun with military forces were being adjusted to peace-time programs. The peak year of 1927 was 109.4 per cent of the 1925-1929 average. By 1930, this figure had been reduced to 72.7 per cent of the average. It later shrank to 22.4 per cent in 1933, and has remained since below 30 per cent. In the first instance, then, the foreign work required to be "rationalized" financially. The undertaking had become too costly for the ability or readiness of the Associations in the United States and Canada to sustain, at least under uncertain economic conditions.

Apart from this factor, however, other forces were at work to bring the entire enterprise under fresh examination. In the year when the contribution requirement was largest, discussions between the Foreign Committee of the Y.M.C.A., a well-known Foundation, and the National Board Y.W.C.A., reached agreement for a joint survey of both of these undertakings. The plan provided that

Emphasis shall be laid upon the study of the work and of the fields of opportunity of the two organizations from the point of view of the largest statesmanship, with a view to discovering what curtailments, modifications, or advances in policies and program promise the largest release of constructive forces within each country and community.

It was stipulated that the national Association movements of the various countries should take an active part in the process of survey and appraisal. The supporting constituency in this country, the objectives of the work as seen by them, and the measure of their prospective support, were included in the plan of study. The survey report was made available late in 1931. It stated that

the Associations abroad constitute essentially a united movement. In spite of the very great variety in program, environment, stage of development, and national and racial temper which the survey has disclosed, the movements studied the world over manifest an inherent unity; and no reason appears why they cannot be developed on an increasing scale as units of world movements of which the North American Associations form integral parts.

The survey found the Christian Associations studied to be

essentially and irreducibly, fellowships for the development of personality in young men and young women, boys and girls, in accord with a Christian character ideal, central in which is that presented in the personality of Jesus. This does not mean that the Associations are everywhere running true to this type nor that they do not frequently stray far from the norm here indicated. It means rather that they reveal an actual or potential unity on the basis of this concept and that only on this basis can any real integrity be found in them, taken as a whole. It means also that when, as sometimes happens, an Association tends to become a

mere service agency, opportunistic in program, it tends to depart from its true function and to become just one agency among many, a creature of its immediate environment, and without continuity of life or distinctiveness of function.

It was advocated that

as rapidly as possible the Associations which are working in non-Christian or non-Protestant communities should find a way to square their membership policy with the realities of the situation they face. Until this is done, they will occupy an anomalous position in that they are making theological distinctions which have no visible relation to their essential purpose or to their programs. In so far as criteria of membership emerge from an objective appraisal of the work itself, no sufficient reason appears why any person otherwise qualified should be barred from exercising the duties and privileges that go with active membership if he or she subscribes to Christian standards of conduct and is seeking to embody Christian ideals in his or her own personality (124, p. 404).

Such views pointed to modification of long-standing patterns of organizational practice in the face of the reality of different cultural conditions. The survey report sought freedom for "members of the fellowship" to be the judge of qualifications of admission rather than those nurtured in the purely Protestant tradition. Donors and sponsors would require constant re-education, the report held. It argued that, if the essential nature of the North American Associations was that of character-building fellowships, "they have the distinctive quality of being responsible for the extension of this fellowship principle . . . on an international and interreligious basis. This fact gives the foreign work its *raison d'être* as an object of giving, and validates its appeal to the constituency of the Associations."

In the second instance, therefore, the foreign work was seen to require rationalization in its intrinsic conceptions. A process of "devolution" was defined, by which nationals would take increased responsibility. The danger of importing alien cultural forms through Western types of building was noted as unsuited to if not inconsistent with a truly indigenous development. Needs and policies for extension received critical attention, as did also the method of preparing leadership. Problems relating to American support were considered in terms of actual as against traditional motivations. Many other suggestions for policy and administration were made, which, however, could not be assimilated before the inroads of depression reductions brought the effective field staff down to fewer than fifty. The transfer of administrative and policy control from the National Council to the International Committee in 1931 (p. 148) appeared somewhat definitely to detach the enterprise from direct responsibility of the American Associations themselves, except for financial co-operation. The individual

member who, it was assumed, was to share the fellowship, was thus made a very remote figure.

It was insisted, however, that this fellowship interpretation of the World Service Program epitomized the genius of the Association Movement as a whole, and that "the Y.M.C.A. belongs to the world." The director of the International Survey stated:

What I have to say about the World Service of the Young Men's Christian Associations will be characterized by a broadly social interpretation of religion, by acceptance of modern educational ideals and methods, by a conception of world brotherhood as inherent in Christianity, and by a conviction that Christianity itself gains rather than loses by intimate, friendly reciprocal relationships with other great religions of the world. If such a point of view is accepted, it follows that the so-called Foreign Work of the North American Y.M.C.A. is not merely the outward thrust of a movement that has its base on this continent. It is the visible expression of the international character of the Association movement itself, which is in essence a world fellowship, having national centers in various countries throughout the world. The Association movement can no more be domesticated in any one country than can the Christian religion. Its genius is international (125).

This thesis amounted substantially to a reversal of the basis of Christian missions during the preceding two generations. This rationalized point of view would, it was argued, appeal strongly to the North American Associations. It envisaged a new common interest between them and other national "unions" of equal stature in a mutual world fellowship. Mr. Frank Slack, who attended the Twenty-first World's Conference of the World's Alliance of Y.M.C.A.'s at Mysore in 1936, gave a significant interpretation of this newer outlook before the International Board now responsible for the foreign work policies of the North American Association. He contrasted the "constituent" relationship of the American Associations as members of the World's Alliance with their direct relationship as a "sending" agency:

We need to make sure that each of these is carried on with due regard to the implications of the other. This is all the more important for us because in terms of responsible action the "direct contact" relationship is much older than the "constituent" function. When the world service work of the North American movements was begun in 1889 and 1890, the World's Alliance did indeed exist, but to all intents and purposes it was then and continued for long afterward to be a dominantly European body. Not until after the Great War did the Alliance really begin to reach out effectively into other parts of the world, take on enlarged staff, and address itself to becoming effectively aware of and serviceable to the entire Association world. Meanwhile these North American movements had gone ahead vigorously and impressively in planting and developing a series of movements in various parts of the work, many of

which are now in the front rank of Association significance. . . . During the past fifteen years, and resulting from a variety of causes both from within and outside the Association world, this "constituent" function has largely developed. The Mysore Conference, especially because of its epoch-making proportion of delegates from other than northern European and North American countries, offered a fresh demonstration of the potentialities of a truly world-wide Alliance, and of the degree to which these younger movements are mature enough to take an unquestioned and an enlarging place of influence in the Association's world counsels.<sup>1</sup>

In such terms, then, has the rationalization of the foreign work been attempted in its constituent relationship to Y.M.C.A. world effort. This modification of outlook was by far the most pregnant aspect of a process of rationalization that affected basic ideology, support, and sense of world fellowship as well. How far have these clarifications been implemented? (42)

The return of the foreign work administration to the direct auspices of the National Council in 1936, and the constitutional readjustments effected between the National Council and International Committee (p. 150) may properly be regarded as an important step toward creating in America the unity of responsibility and policy necessary to effectuate the kind of world co-operation described above. Confronted with insistent appeals from many parts of the world to return to the earlier basis and volume of assistance from North America, a "program of rehabilitation" was authorized in 1935 that called for an annual budget expansion of fifty thousand dollars. Though quite praiseworthy in its main purposes (e.g., to relieve undue strain in some fields, permit overdue furloughs to overworked and weary veterans of depleted staffs, and accept new opportunities in some countries), the plan appeared to represent a return to traditional lines of policy. As a result, the efforts to secure funds in the home field were strongly reminiscent of earlier years, despite some gratifying examples of genuine member interest. On the whole, the bulk of the annual budget was met through personal subscriptions though sponsored formally by many deeply interested Associations.

One may express the hope that the processes employed will be such as will enhance the good will and support of rank-and-file members in the world fellowship appeal. Under the difficult conditions of recent international conflict—economic, ideological, social—the rationalization of the foreign work of the Y.M.C.A. in terms of the individual member assumes great timeliness and importance.

## IX. STATUS OF LAY CONTROL

At no time more than during the period just following the World

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<sup>1</sup> International Committee Dinner, New York, June, 1937.

War was the Association's claim to being a "lay" movement more stoutly made, and more broadly denied.

A strong indictment of the tendency toward secretarial control in the affairs of the International Committee had been made by the Mark Jones report (p. 146). This only reflected conditions throughout the entire organization. One of the chief concerns of the 1919 International Convention, however, was this preponderate participation of secretaries. In taking action looking toward the reconstruction of the national legislative body, the Convention stipulated that laymen should constitute a majority in this body. When the plan for the creation of a National Council was approved by the Constitutional Convention in 1923, it was provided that each "electoral" district should be represented by *two* laymen and *one* secretary. This assured a national legislative body of dominantly lay character. This was a really notable achievement. The provision has been steadfastly observed, and has brought forward many local laymen of marked ability and devotion, increasing appreciably the number of those responsibly related to the development of policy at local, state, and national levels.

The discussion of lay-secretarial relationships, that had become quite aggressive before 1900, never ceased entirely. It continues today. The problems were never wholly solved (p. 258). The relationship of principal and agent, which controlled in the local relations between board and secretary, had to be reconciled with a growing professional attitude among the secretaries. This was something quite distinct from the purely executive function found in business relationships and familiar to the boards. It became increasingly clear that large as were the business operations of the Associations, the program responsibilities and functions of the secretaries were more akin to those of teaching, religious education, or social work. These functions required specialized techniques centered in the better understanding of the individual, and in the constructive guidance of group experience. Only if the secretarial function sought to release the peculiar contribution of laymen would the respective functions find their logical harmony. Among various studies around this problem, the investigations of Urice sought, among other things, to differentiate between "what the layman brings" and "what the secretary brings" as follows (167):

The layman who engages in the guidance and control of the Association brings to it:

His representation of his own group.

His representation of the community as he understands it.

His knowledge of the needs and interests of youth in the community.

His ability to commend the Association to his group and to the community, and his desire that it shall be worthy of commendation.

His special abilities in relation to the enterprises of the Association.

These things are not more or less valuable than similar contributions of professionals. They are something different in kind. They do not represent an extension of the secretary's personality or responsibility; they belong to the layman in his own right. They should be seen as lay specialization.

The secretary, in his relationship to the Association, brings to it:

A knowledge of the traditions, experience, and ideals of the Association Movement.

An ability to unite able and representative people into functioning units and to incorporate them in the fellowship.

An ability to discern new possibilities of fellowship among the persons who compose the Association and the community, and to aid persons in realizing them.

A knowledge of the resources that enlarge the possibilities of enterprises and activities, and a skill in making such resources available.

An alertness to social needs, an ability to make others aware of them, and a competence in relating others to the task of meeting them.

An ability to discriminate among the interests and needs of persons, and to aid them in satisfying them.

A competence in focusing the necessities and interests of the organization on each concrete instance of management, in order that all necessary values may be taken into account.

A perspective on the religious meanings and possibilities of the fellowship and a skill in translating them into reality.

Competence in these things represents the specialization of the profession.

Similarly, Professor Arthur L. Swift, Jr., as Director of the New York City Y.M.C.A. Survey, made a threefold classification of functions within which the relationships of secretary and laymen were envisaged:

*Policy formulation* is the task of both professionals and laymen. In this they co-operate, each bringing his special insights, experience, and skill to bear on the problems involved.

*Policy determination* is the responsibility of laymen alone. This derives from their legal status and their relationship to the community. Their action establishes policies.

*Policy execution* is the responsibility of secretaries. Once policies are established, it is the task of the professional to see that they are carried out. Lay and volunteer workers may participate in this, but the secretary is ultimately responsible to the lay group that policies are carried out, whoever engages in the tasks involved (127, p. 45).

Realization of the full possibilities of such relationships was de-

pendent upon the type of laymen who had been drawn into the service of the local Associations. A survey of the local boards of directors of 560 Associations was made by the writer in 1930. Information was received regarding 9,459 board members. These ranged in age from 18 to 86 years, with a median of 47.6 years. Those below 30 years of age were 4.3 per cent; those above 60 were 13.5 per cent. The median age in eastern states was 4.4 years above that for the southern states, and 2.4 years above that for the central states. In education, 55.2 per cent were college graduates; 13.5 per cent had done some graduate work beyond the fourth year of college. At the time of this study, this educational distribution represented an average approxi-

TABLE XXVI  
PRINCIPAL OCCUPATIONS OF Y.M.C.A. BOARD MEMBERS IN 1930

Business and Industrial Occupations.....	61.2%
Professional Occupations.....	20.9
Clerical Occupations.....	5.1
Unskilled Labor.....	3.5
Retired.....	2.7
Skilled Labor.....	1.7
Agricultural Occupations.....	1.3
Miscellaneous.....	3.6
Total.....	100.0%

mately two years beyond that of secretaries then in service. The median tenure was 5.0 years, with some having served as long as 52 years. One in eight had served ten or more years. Rotation plans providing for a free year before re-election were far from prevalent. Annual service hours ranged from 20 to as high as 150. Large amounts of time were given by these men to this form of community service.

Among these lay board members only one in six could be considered as a professional man. Business men greatly predominated as usual. Table XXVII presents a somewhat typical example of the occupational composition of a local board of directors in a city of 22,000 people.

The prevailing occupational relationships of these individuals were without doubt such as to enhance the prestige and work of the Association in this city, and to facilitate its financial requirements. Nearly all were business men. Few if any had professional backgrounds. Among them one could not be sure whether there were any at all who were well qualified by temperament, training, and professional practice to guide the policies and program activities which the youth of such a city require. Thirteen of the 21 had been added within five years, but they averaged more than forty years of age. They had less than full college training. Only one, a banker, was less than thirty years of age.

The condition revealed by this exhibit has become a serious one for practically all Associations. However, there are some hopeful aspects. One is the new interest apparent among certain younger laymen who are related to some phase of Association work among boys. Such leaders have come into local and national leadership through committee and club activity. Two national assemblies of such younger laymen were held in 1935 and 1937. By means of the "Laymen's Exchange" they have sought to inform themselves about best practices in

TABLE XXVII  
OCCUPATIONS OF BOARD MEMBERS IN A CITY OF 22,000

NUMBER AGE	OCCUPATIONS	EDUCA- TION	YEARS SERVED	MAJOR COMMITTEE INTERESTS	OTHER POSITIONS OF COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP												
					a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m
Presi- dent....54	Insurance.....	College	6	Foreign Work.....	x				x				x				
2....62	Tobacconist.....	H	20	Boys' Work.....		x	x	x					x				
3....32	Jeweler.....	H	5	Finance.....								x			x		
4....36	Banker.....	H	1	Finance.....		x	x	x					x				
5....70	Tobacconist.....	H	20	Finance.....	x	x	x						x		x		
6....45	Insurance.....	C	19	Finance.....	x	x						x	x				
7....37	Knitting Mill.....	C	4	Publicity.....													x
8....42	Storage Warehouse.....	H	.5	Membership.....	x												
9....55	Real Estate and Ins.	H	7	House Committee.....		x							x				
10....24	Banker.....	H	.5	Physical.....													
11....47	Supt. Military Inst.	C	5	Educational.....	x		x										
12....60	Cotton Mills.....	C	4	Religious.....	x	x						x			x		
13....34	Attorney-at-law.....	C	4	Physical.....									x				
14....60	Tobacco Warehouse.....	H	23	Religious.....			x						x				
15....44	Insurance.....	H	2	Finance.....	x		x						x				
16....34	Storage Warehouse.....	C	.5	Physical.....	x		x					x					
17....60	Auto Accessories.....	C	8	Finance.....								x	x				
18....57	Wholesale Dry Goods	H	.5	Membership.....		x						x	x				
19....36	Funeral Director.....	H	5	Boys' Dept.....	x		x										
20....72	Hardware.....	C	22	House Committee.....	x	x	x	x									
21....40	Automobiles.....	H	2	House Committee.....	x	x	x							x			

- a. Community Chest
- b. City hospital
- c. Tuberculosis hospital
- d. Chamber of Commerce
- e. Boy Scout Council
- f. Home for Aged
- g. Red Cross
- h. Civic Music Association
- i. Retail Merchants' Association
- j. Denominational school
- k. Rotary Club
- l. Kiwanis Club
- m. Lions' Club
- n. Orphan school
- o. American Legion
- p. City School Board

the actual leadership of groups. They are representative of more than forty-five thousand group leaders reported in 1937. They are giving to the term "layman" a new significance. Their participation in the actual activities has richly reinforced their participation as members of policy-determining boards.

Similarly, the advent of a vigorous body of young laymen designating themselves as the "International Association of Y's Men's Clubs" has since the early post-war period brought another new lay force into the Association work of many communities. These younger laymen pride themselves upon their ability to direct their own activities. They desire and permit no secretarial steering. Patterned after the typical local service club, with weekly meetings and an annual convention, they are forthrightly interested in the support of Y.M.C.A. activities, as laymen, and conceive their rôle as an organization independent of but strongly

allied with the Y.M.C.A. at home and abroad. They hold and seek no organic relation to the Y.M.C.A., however.

In an earlier chapter (p. 23) it was pointed out that originally the "layman" and the "member" were the same. Laymen were the typical young members. They were *young* men. They grew older with the years, and their devotion to the Association's enterprises constitutes one of the most convincing evidences of the holding power of the Association. Undoubtedly selection takes place by which a certain type of member is so retained. There is some evidence to show that, characteristically, the typical adherent is the young man from business, who as he grows older rises in business and in many other fruitful relationships within the community. Undoubtedly the Y.M.C.A. receives its full share of such important assistance.

The fact that only 4.3 per cent of the more than nine thousand lay board members studied were under thirty years of age reveals what must be regarded as a serious shortcoming for an organization designated by the American Youth Commission study as a "youth-membership" organization (65). It is admitted that sound administration of the Association's property interests constitutes a real obligation to the community, yet hardly one to require an almost complete isolation of the voice of youth from policy-making boards. A few Associations have feared the possibility that the youth voice, under certain provocation, might attempt to seize control of both policy and property. They have set up membership corporations in which the right of nomination, retained by the central board, is conferred only upon those proved in organization service. The resulting relatively small membership bears a very close resemblance to the business corporation. It is at best a negative solution of a problem that still remains paramount: namely, how to ensure that the lay voice, and particularly the youth voice, shall be heard in the councils and share in the controls of the local Association organization. Unless these contributions are heard there, they can hardly be expected in wider Association relationships.

The function of the lay board has become a matter of renewed interest in recent years, whether in religious, educational or social-work organizations. Various significant studies have been made and opinions advanced (79). The relation between public opinion, lay control (if not member control), and the rôle of the expert is involved. In the Y.M.C.A., to a peculiar degree, the problems assume great importance because of the acceptance of the idea of lay fellowship as a central doctrine, youth needs as the primary field of concern, and democratic method as the avowed form of activity. Hendry and others have maintained that "lay participation in improving environment" can best be achieved in forms of community organization that transcend agency lines (78). This presumes the emergence of a new basis of interest substantial enough to provide the reality and continuity of an embracing voluntary association.

## X. STEPS TOWARD PROFESSIONALIZATION OF THE SECRETARSHIP

At the close of the World War, the Association confronted an unprecedented problem in the field of personnel. The number of secretaries employed in usual peace-time Association work had reached about 4,500 by 1920. Approximately 25,000 individuals had served in war work with the Y.M.C.A. at home or abroad. Many of these had found satisfaction in this work, and desired to enter into permanent service. Some were employed in local Associations in various forms of adjustment service among returned soldiers. Many could not be accommodated at all. Secretaries in the regular service were aroused to a sense of need for improved personnel standards. The period since the World War has been in the main devoted to the study of the definition and application of such standards.

In the early decades the Association was truly a lay Movement. Then, to be sure, Associations frequently designated "agents," "librarians," and "missionaries" to supervise the "rooms," seek out strangers, and dispense hospitality. With the advent of the building movement, the need for permanent leaders became evident. Robert R. McBurney and others, by their originality and devotion, had demonstrated a new function relating to the organization of lay effort. This service made a strong appeal to many able young men. When the Secretarial Bureau was first set up in 1884, there were large numbers of candidates, including many who had inadequate personal qualities and training (p. 98). The number of secretaries grew very rapidly (p. 95). It also diversified rapidly with the growing departmentalization of program. Training institutions were established at Springfield, Mass., at Chicago, Illinois, and finally at Nashville, Tennessee, in 1920. The number of secretaries reported reached a peak at 5,475 in 1928, declining to 5,282 just before the onset of the great depression in 1929 (Canadian figures included). Declines of approximately 30 per cent took place by 1934, since when increases of not more than 10 per cent have taken place.

Some part of the decline in reported numbers of secretaries since 1928 was due to the establishment, in 1928 and 1930, of more careful standards of registering secretaries. This was particularly true since 1934, when a classification plan, described below, was put into effect. Attention has since turned sharply to qualitative standards.

Many men had already spent almost a full life-time of service long before the World War. As early as 1890 the meetings of the General Secretaries' Association heard discussions of such topics as "Are We Called to a Life-work?" Concepts of tenure and devotion were employed interchangeably. The place of a "call" was given great emphasis. Those who did not openly commit themselves to permanence of service were often regarded as being less devoted. Not only was the secretaryship itself increasingly institutionalized, but the conception of life tenure as well (p. 258). When, in 1906, two-thirds of the secretaries

in service "stated that they do not consider Association work as a life-work," it had been an occasion for deep concern. Concern also about the "tendency to restlessness and too frequent change in the secretaryship" had been apparent for many years. There were no agreed standards for employment between local Associations, nor for recognition by the General Secretaries' Association. Devotion was the chief requirement.

The International Convention in 1913 heard proposals emanating from the newly created Annual Conference on the Association Profession that led to the setting up of special commissions reporting back to the Convention in 1916 and 1919. Two years later, in 1921, at a national meeting of the Employed Officers' Conference steps were taken to launch a pension plan and to strengthen the Secretarial Bureau of the International Committee. As plans for the creation of the National Council took shape, a Personnel Division was included as one of three sections of the organization.

In 1922 a general plan of certification for entering secretaries was launched. It was voluntary in character, so far as the entrant was concerned, but Associations were asked to sign agreements to employ as new secretaries only those eligible under the Certification Plan. The listed minimum qualifications included physical examination, approved church membership standing, "high-school graduation or its equivalent" (later "in organized study" was added), and a successful two-year probationary period of service in a local Association. When the plan was started, "blanketing in" all secretaries then at work was decided upon, so that the standards were applied only to those entering after October, 1922. The entire certification was voluntary, however, and at least the educational standards were low.

In 1927, when the Association of Employed Officers was holding its triennial meeting around "The Young Men's Christian Association as a Christian Educational Movement," admission to the secretaryship was still possible for those with grammar school education. In 1929, however, the National Council authorized minimum standards for recognition of all new secretaries in the Official Roster, such as age eighteen, high-school graduation or equivalent, full-time service, and other items. In that year, also, the National Council recommended that the Board of Certification (still a voluntary agency) "certify after September 1, 1931, only those applicants for certification who have had a full four-year college education or its equivalent." Here again, as had been true in the case of high-school minimum training, the advance was made first around the voluntary or permissive step, after which a little later the Associations were ready to make it formal and inclusive.

In 1930, the Board of Certification had made the college-graduation level a requirement for certification, though still on a voluntary basis for other Associations and entrants. The Council commended demonstration in Ohio and a few other states, where Association repre-

sentatives by recruiting visits in standard colleges were successful in securing an impressive number of candidates with good general college equipment. Nevertheless, the total percentage of men of college training among the entrants at that time would not have exceeded 25. But as recently as 1933, the national professional body adopted a new "Classification Plan," which lifted the educational level to college graduation as a general requirement for recognition. This was made official for admission to the Official Roster as of May 1, 1934, by subsequent National Council action. The two-year probationary experience now became a general requirement, except for those entering from Association colleges, where one year sufficed (this exception was abrogated in 1938). In 1934, also the Council held that "the time has come to define the content of the professional equipment of the secretary, and to reformulate the standards of professional education for Y.M.C.A. work." The work of the specializing colleges and of other centers for the professional training of educators and of leaders in religious and social work was examined for contributions to the desired plan of study. Such a plan was proposed and approved in 1936 by both the Association of Secretaries and the National Council. Its main features were as follows:

- (1) Professional training supplementing general education up to a total of five years for both, and six if possible; at least one year to have the value of training at graduate level.
- (2) Professional training to provide basic material for all types of secretary, and additional studies designed to equip the secretary for the particular type of position he expects to fill or the age level in which he may specialize.
- (3) Field work to cover not less than two nor more than three phases of Association work, such as guidance, group activity, administration, etc., including experience in local Y.M.C.A. service under joint supervision of the Association involved and representatives of the professional school.

This program of training was not regarded as final by any means. The Committee on General and Professional Training, representing both the Council and the professional body, recognized the probability that well-qualified recruits for the Association's professional service would come from many different centers, especially university centers where resources from many disciplines and schools might be combined into a type of course appropriate for preparation for the present-day secretarial function. It was felt that a limited number of smaller institutions specializing in training for Y.M.C.A. service might still be needed, though the annual intake of new secretaries would hardly be sufficient to require separate institutions for professional training exclusively for this type of work.

Finally, in tracing this rather slow but significant progress from no educational standard at all to one emphasizing a clear field of special-

ized professional training, the National Council stipulated that it would, following 1935, recognize college graduation from only those colleges recognized in the list of formally accredited colleges published by the American Council on Education. Discussions looking to further concentration of recruitment have since been under way.

If required specialized training bears a close relation to the maturing of the professional mind, so also does the development of special forms of group protection and, more particularly, the growth of a sense of disinterested workmanship. Secretaries joined in an Insurance Alliance in 1882, which served through its mutual provisions to enhance the sense of interdependence of the members. The establishment of the Retirement Fund, Inc., in 1925, with a large accrued liability fund provided by subscription, has since made it possible to retire more than seven hundred secretaries at or soon after age sixty, under conditions that tended greatly to stabilize the older groups in service and yet to open the way for younger men to be promoted.

The achievement of competent workmanship, which is the fundamental basis of professional relationship, has become an engaging reality for large numbers of secretaries during the last fifteen years. The triennial Secretaries' Conference in 1924 emphasized "standardization" around the "all-round program" concept, only to abandon it as the newer educational insights and method gained headway. The pressure of swiftly changing social conditions in 1930 concentrated interest in the relationship of the Y.M.C.A. itself to social change rather than upon the professional implications of such changes (165). Attention in 1933 was placed mainly upon increased competency in guidance, group activity, social and religious education, administration, and lay relationship. Steps were also taken toward higher standards of selection, training, and performance (163). In 1936, the latter became the central concern. More than nine hundred project reports were gathered by the committee preparing for the triennial conference, and given critical review. These steps represented a genuine beginning of professional appraisal and evaluation, although the nature of the work functions involved has made it difficult to develop adequate records, sound norms, and a refined technology (154). Preoccupation with heavy program schedules and routine administration in times of economic uncertainty and social stress have resulted in delay, and have prevented the concentration of interest needed to secure genuine professionalization of secretarial service. There remain, also, some who fear that such a trend represents lessening of emphasis upon the traditional purposes.

The advent of many other agencies working among youth, with often similar objectives, has led to a need of and readiness for exchange among these various types of workers. Association secretaries have more and more felt an identity of interest with educators, guidance and personal workers, recreational leaders, social workers, etc.; and have attended their professional gatherings in increasing numbers. In recent

years, special group conferences of Y.M.C.A. secretaries have been held in connection with each of these other professional bodies. The organization of a National Association for the Study of Group Work by representatives of these diverse professional backgrounds suggests a development that may prove to be of large directional significance. It represents a joint search across institutionalized agency lines for the common elements of method and goal that may in time create a common professional mind and technique more potent than the separate agencies of employment (54). At present, however, such common concern at the professional level is noted only as a tendency toward modification of traditional practices. These practices arose from special institutionalized programs of agencies. One may not conclude because of the emergence of a common professional technic that all separate organizations should end and a single program be substituted under a single policy control. The Association leadership, both secretarial and lay, is becoming increasingly interested in the possibility of improving the quality of results achieved from the activity programs of local Associations. A considerable portion of the leaders are moving away from the assumptions that led them to defend in the quality of their results mainly because of the religious purposes that gave rise to them. This, in itself, is a definite gain; it is an example of institutional modification. A. G. Knebel, an older secretary who had spanned four decades of Association service, has documented in his autobiography an experience of personal transition that was probably duplicated in many others (156).

The period of adjustment since the end of the World War runs down to the present, but does not terminate. The brief survey of these nearly twenty years that has been attempted here covers certain salient aspects of the following:

- Creation and modification of the National Council;
- Changes in constituency;
- Modifications of method and emphasis;
- Clarification of aims;
- Building trends;
- The financial base;
- Community relationships;
- Rationalization of the foreign work;
- The status of lay control;
- Steps toward professionalization of the Secretaryship.

In each instance, the narrative has concluded but has not been closed. Each feature is still dynamic with internal movement, with external implication. Such a volume as this can hardly escape an obligation to look on into the future to trace the possible, even the probable, outcomes of these tendencies. In the final chapter some such attempt is

made. But before that can be made intelligently, it is necessary to look somewhat more carefully at the social surroundings of which the American Young Men's Christian Association has been so inevitable a part. It is necessary also to look as closely as possible at some of the major patterns of institutional behavior within the Y.M.C.A., and to try to understand the adaptive processes at work therein. With such a background, one may hope to look forward with some appreciation of what is the characteristic genius of the Association, and the kind of adjustment it may be expected to make before unfolding opportunity.

## CHAPTER VI

# THE SOCIAL BACKGROUND OF DEVELOPING INSTITUTIONALISM IN THE Y.M.C.A.

IT LIES beyond the scope of this study to attempt to identify and examine all of the points of correspondence between the changing social environment and the developing modes of activity in Y.M.C.A.'s. It is also beyond intention to assume any direct causation between particular conditions and events in the social surroundings and manifestations within the Association. The main purpose of the present chapter will have been achieved if, instead, there results an awareness of at least some of the factors in the American environment that affected Y.M.C.A. development and an appreciation of the naturalness of their influence upon the distinctive forms of behavior of some of the persons living within that environment who happened to be associated in Y.M.C.A.'s.

It is important to realize that the young Americans who organized the early Associations in this country must have shared the faith of the average man in the opportunity that James Truslow Adams saw as the clue to the development of American culture: "Opportunity, the chance to grow into something bigger and finer, as bigger and finer appeared to him . . . as freedom and opportunity for himself and those like him to rise. . . . If Americanism in the above sense has been a dream, it has also been one of the great realities in American life. It has been a moving force as truly as wheat or gold. It is all that has distinguished America from a mere quantitative comparison in wealth or art or letters or power with the nations of Europe. It is Americanism, and its shrine has been in the heart of the common man. He may not have done much for American culture in its narrower sense, but in its wider meaning it is he who has almost alone fought to hold fast to the American dream. That is what has made the common man a great figure in the American drama. This is the dominant motive in the American epic" (2, p. 174).

Just as in the political democracy it had been the birthright of any American boy to aspire to become President, so in the economic world he could hope to become rich and powerful. That this was contrary to the experience of the average young man could not be denied. Nor did many young men actually consider supreme political attainment as a personal goal. Yet the knowledge that measurable attainment in both

political and economic fields was at least theoretically possible for anyone, powerfully undergirded the sense of worth and status of the average man (11). Of such faith were those young men who organized the first Young Men's Christian Associations in this country, who grew into their leadership and shaped their policies, and who set the patterns of institutional development that gave to these Associations their typical structure and outlook.

Not only did the American youth who founded the early Y.M.C.A.'s share in the American dream of opportunity for the common man, but they became actors in the unfolding pageant of civilization itself. Of this majestic development many writers of recent years have told the essential story, and have agreed substantially as to its principal elements.

In his review (2), Mr. Adams discussed such topics as the following:

- The Men of Destiny
- A Civilization Established
- America Secedes from the Empire
- The Nation Finds Itself
- America Secedes from the Old World
- The Sun Rises in the West
- The North Begins to Hustle
- Manifest Destiny Lays a Golden Egg
- Brothers' Blood
- The End of the Frontier
- The Flag outruns the Constitution
- The Age of the Dinosaurs
- America Revisits the Old World.

Charles and Mary Beard, surveying *The Rise of American Civilization* (6), distinguished between the "Agricultural Era" from colonial days to the Civil War, and the "Industrial Era" which followed. In their account of the latter were treated:

- The Approach of the Irrepressible Conflict
- The Second American Revolution [The Civil War]
- Rounding Out the Continent
- The Triumph of Business Enterprise
- Rise of the National Labor Movement
- The Triple Revolution in Agriculture
- The Politics of Acquisition and Enjoyment
- More Worlds to Conquer
- The Gilded Age
- Imperial America
- Towards Social Democracy
- America in the Balance of Power
- The Quest of Normalcy
- The Machine Age

In a more recent historical review of American life, in which a dozen competent historians have collaborated (16), the colonial and revolu-

tional periods are followed by other periods (each a volume) defined and captioned as follows:

- The Rise of the Common Man, 1830-1850
- The Irrepressible Conflict, 1850-1865
- The Emergence of Modern America, 1865-1878
- The Nationalization of Business, 1878-1898
- The Rise of the City, 1878-1898
- The Quest for Social Justice, 1898-1914
- The Great Crusade and After, 1914-1928

In each exhibit, one finds almost the same story. It is the story of the struggle to subjugate and control the vast territories and resources of the continent, and to adjust the human conditions along the way (39). The Young Men's Christian Associations were identified with both aspects. They partook of the projects and tensions associated with these fateful years. They naturally took on the character of their times. They also tended to reproduce the structures of the emerging industrial society, and were inseparable from the controls operative therein. In this chapter, certain economic, educational, and religious elements of the social background are discussed. The nature of the characteristic community setting within which Associations arose is considered, and the unique place of the voluntary association in the culture described. These discussions will reveal how intimately the Association and its institutions were identified with the culture, and how far they achieved or failed to achieve the "critical realism," the beginnings of which Parrington discerned as one of the "main currents of American thought" (30).

### I. THE ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

The economic foundations of the American civilization so underlie every aspect of the complex and diversified activity of the Young Men's Christian Association that they require somewhat extended discussion if their relationship to the organization be understood. For the Association spanned the entire period during which the economic life of an essentially agricultural era was superseded by that of a highly industrial society. Much of the development of the Association reflected the personal and social problems associated with this transition.

First of all, the westward population movement appealed especially to young men. During the period from 1830 to 1860, the population of the Old Northwest, comprising Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin, increased fourfold (15, p. 377). "Few facilities for the moral benefit of strangers" were noted by the Chicago delegate at the first national Y.M.C.A. gathering in 1854 in referring to his city as "the reception tunnel of the mighty Northwest," and stating that "the Christian young men of Chicago feel the importance of raising a beacon light" because of wide-open conditions dangerous to the life of young men.

From 1850 to 1900 the population center moved three hundred miles westward into Indiana, and the actual population itself more than trebled. New routes of communication by rail superseded the slower water routes, occupying the labor of large numbers of young men, and facilitating their journey toward new opportunities in strange locations. Government policies facilitated settlement of western lands. Many were lured toward productive opportunities in agriculture. The advent of the reaper and other mechanized methods forced others to the centers of manufacture for livelihood. The mass movement of young men from the villages to the growing population centers was notably stimulated and conditioned by the new industrial factor of machine activity. The advance of invention continued with marked acceleration between 1865 and 1900. There was a total gain of 541 per cent in inventions during this period, with resulting multiplication of products and differentiation of processes. These meant greatly enlarged opportunity for young men. The increase of manufactures, the extension of trunk and branch lines of railways, the piling up of business consolidations, the development of the banking and credit structure, all represented enlarged occupational opportunity, which centered for the most part in the cities. There for young men wages were earned, leisure spent, character challenged, career determined.

In consequence, the Associations characteristically identified themselves with that urban opportunity and future. Though concerned with religious objectives, they did not hesitate to serve intermediate needs. For example, the New York City Association records locating 242,660 jobs for young men in the period from 1865 to 1929. Associations sought both to find a job for the young man, and to build a better man for the job. The Association itself became a part of the young man's opportunity. It offered not only an individual experience in activities of interest, but attractive group relationships as well, which were prized by many as valuable in themselves.

The close identification of the Y.M.C.A. with the expanding railway industry was symbolic. Integration of the economic order was sharply accelerated following the Civil War by the period of railway building, which with startling rapidity threw many lines across the continent and covered the interior. For three or four decades, beginning with 1870, the average railroad construction each year approximated five thousand miles. With such new integrating influences in the productive and distributive life of the country came also competition, discrimination in rates, and other abuses. These led to ineffective state regulation, superseded in turn by agitation for national regulation and the creation of the Interstate Commerce Commission in 1886 as the first major instance of federal regulation in this field. The health of the railroads was immediately related to the prosperity of the entire life of the nation, and constituted a circulatory system for its healthy activity. The Young Men's Christian Association, during these years,

had most emphatically identified itself with the railroads, accepting their support and welcoming the opportunity to work among railway men. The prosperity of the railway Y.M.C.A.'s was dependent, of course, upon that of the railroads. Associations were concerned, naturally, with the provision of needed services at division points, where railway workers were congregated. The Associations were interested chiefly in the human relationships and direct contacts, and little if at all in the growing public demand for regulation of the railways systems themselves. There were already 66 railroad Y.M.C.A.'s when the Interstate Commerce Commission was created. There developed the view that the Associations served young men as men, as individuals, maintaining a noncommittal or neutral position with reference to "contro-

TABLE XXVIII  
GROWTH OF MANUFACTURES FROM 1849 TO 1899, INCLUSIVE

FACTORIES, AND HAND AND NEIGHBORHOOD INDUSTRIES	ESTABLISH- MENTS	CAPI- TAL	WAGE EARNERS	WAGES	COST OF MATERIALS	VALUE OF PRODUCTS	VALUE ADDED BY MANUFACTURE
% increase 1849-1859....	14.1	89.4	37.0	60.0	85.8	85.0	84.1
% increase 1859-1869....	79.6	67.8	56.6	63.8	93.0	79.5	63.3
% increase 1869-1879....	0.7	64.7	33.0	52.8	70.8	58.6	41.4
% increase 1879-1889....	40.0	133.8	55.6	99.5	52.0	74.5	113.4
% increase 1889-1899....	44.1	50.4	24.8	22.7	42.3	38.7	34.3

versial" questions, and not presuming to sit in judgment on the social desirability of the conditions surrounding those thus served.

A similar position was maintained with reference to young men in other fields of industry during this era of marked industrial consolidation. Thriving under favorable tariff legislation over many years, the great industries became the dominant force in American culture. The United States rose to a foremost position among manufacturing nations due, according to the 1900 United Census Reports "to certain distinct causes, natural and otherwise, five of which may be definitely formulated as follows: (1) agricultural resources; (2) mineral resources; (3) highly developed transportation facilities; (4) freedom of trade between states and territories; (5) freedom from inherited and over-conservative ideas. A study of these causes affords an explanation of the great development of manufacturing in the United States in the past, as well as an indication of its possibilities in the future" (40). The Thirteenth Census, in 1910, reported on the growth of manufactures on the basis of ten-year periods from the Census of 1850 as shown in Table XXVIII (41).

The monopolistic practices of the great corporations, like those of the railroads, called forth government regulation, both state and federal. The Sherman Anti-Trust Act of 1890 sought to curb or end these practices, and its relative futility led to later enactments after the turn of the century. The natural course of the policy of *laissez faire* had led to great combinations under single control, placing only too often the

destiny of large portions of the population at the mercy of unscrupulous men, who sought only the increase of their own wealth and power.

The Association's prosperity showed distressing correspondence with the chart of business activity, which registered recurrent peaks and depressions (4). There was no security, despite the enormous business expansion and the unlimited natural resources of the land. Wholesale prices rose during the Civil War to the highest point since the War of 1812, building huge fortunes in the North; but broke with the end of the war and fell to levels that rallied only slightly with the business cycle. Panics appeared, in 1873, in 1884, in 1893; and came to be regarded as normal economic phases. In comparisons made between bank clearings and aggregate operating expenditures and memberships in Y.M.C.A.'s for several decades following 1880, it was found that the latter following the curve of bank clearings, though tardily, and with less amplitude (5, Ch. IX). It was apparent that an agency such as the Y.M.C.A. was dependent not only upon the ability of the well-to-do to continue to give substantially, but also upon the continued employment of young men that allowed them to pay their memberships. Was the Y.M.C.A., then, a function of the total economic life, obliged to rely upon general prosperity for its sustenance, and therefore prevented from being too critical of the conditions that underlay that prosperity? Was its economic base such as to make it dependent, in fact, upon largess? Were its social relationships such that it could apply its ability to serve wholly and solely in terms of human need? (38)

Boundless resources made the doctrine of national self-containment for a time appear feasible. In 1860, the Eighth Census Report (15, p. 251) had said, "the nation seemed speedily approaching a period of complete independence in respect to the products of skilled labor, and national security and happiness seemed about to be insured by the harmonious development of all the great interests of the people." The closing of the western frontier presently gave a new reality to the problem of individual well-being under conditions that the individual could no longer control. The Alaska purchase in 1867, and the admission to statehood of Nebraska, Colorado, the Dakotas, Montana, Washington, Idaho, and finally Utah by 1895 completed the continental area within which the American Democracy must win or lose. Floods of immigrants, mostly young men, came each year to the land of freedom. These were, as has already been pointed out, a matter of special concern to the Associations, who regarded their duty toward them in both civic and religious terms.

It was perhaps inevitable that the Associations should remain indifferent to the growth of capitalism, though it undoubtedly became rank and ruthless during these years. The financial crises of 1893 and 1907 did not stop the trend toward vast combinations and the flaunting of monopolistic practices so flagrant that reluctant governments set about drastic regulation. Great combinations in the field of transportation,

coal, steel, agricultural machinery, packing, and presently communications and utilities, drew the fire of public disapproval. In these years, Theodore Roosevelt lashed out against the great trusts, and famous suits were instituted under new regulatory laws. Successive tariff acts designed to protect "infant industries" in this country helped vastly to increase the holdings of American business. They did so without taking account of the ill health of agriculture and the hazards of the rural population; or the jeopardy of the consumers who set up protective organizations in self-defense; or the rising protest of workers, whether organized or not, who bore much of the burden of such "prosperity" in a lowered standard of living. There is little in the Association literature to indicate that its leaders were very deeply concerned about these problems; though at times prophetic voices were heard on these subjects.

The Associations needed, and generally maintained, the backing of the banking community. By 1904 the demand for the reform of banking became strong; and the Federal Reserve Act was proposed, though it did not become law until eleven years later. Although this was not directly related to Associations' purposes as such, the large acquisition of property by the Associations, totalling over 250 millions by 1929, made them directly concerned with the movement of credit, and the financing of such undertakings. Debts aggregating about one-fifth of the total valuation had to be carried through the co-operation and understanding support of the banks. Under these conditions, not to mention participation of banking representatives on many of the local boards, it was not likely that Associations would be among those pressing for the reform of the very institutions upon which they became increasingly dependent.

With the turn of the century, when the United States became a world power, the North American Associations also undertook phenomenal expansion abroad. The concerns of the United States in the Far East, in the West Indies, and in Panama became the basis of a foreign policy that determined her relations not only with the Latin American states, but with other world powers as well. The policy in China enunciated by John Hay in 1899 remained a proud tradition among the statesmen of whatever party, and the "Open Door" became a fact. The rich natural resources of America, whose wasteful exploitation by private interests had drawn the wrath of the federal government and led to its first conservation policy, provided the base for a foreign trade that expanded year by year up to the World War. As a debtor nation, the general economy was likewise favorable to expansion policies of the enterprises comprised within the culture. It was during these years that the American Associations extended their own "foreign work" beyond all previous expectation. Expenditures for this purpose advanced more than 1400 per cent. As already noted, the formal patronage of the government itself was extended, particularly through the White House Conference, during the Taft administration, for the pur-

pose of securing funds for the erection of Association buildings in fields abroad.

In general, therefore, it must be recognized that the Associations maintained a generally dependent, if not subservient, relationship to the main economic forces of the time. That they were rarely if ever in a position to, and rarely if ever did, protest against economic excesses is patent. Possibly it would have been expecting too much to assume that Associations so organized should currently manifest insights and concern usually absent in contemporaries, and rare even among the historians of the time. One of the latter, Miss Tarbell, in discussing the period from 1878 to 1898 under the title, *The Nationalizing of Business*, concluded that the most notable development of this period had been "an extraordinary unification of the nation's economic life." But although admitting that among other significant benefits to the people, "the triumph of industrial consolidation knitted the country together in ever closer bonds, increasing the feeling of nationhood," she also observed that

the end of the period witnessed the triumph of that process of interlocking and combination which at its opening had been so generally challenged. Neither appeals to the philosophy of democracy, nor political agitation, nor restraining laws, nor even the recurring depressions which had disclosed the over-expansion and exploitation of industrial mergers, had halted their progress (36).

And later

there was, moreover, a deepening conviction that ethical and humanitarianism had a vital relationship to economics and that a failure to observe them constituted a continuing menace to social stability. . . . On all sides experiments in education, technological training, economic co-operation, the shorter day, better wages, the model factory, better housing, attested the belief that life could be made more tolerable for the masses. But Carnegie's strong man still occupied the saddle. He had fashioned a vast nation-wide industrial order, and he had no intention of resigning the kingdom which he had so laboriously prepared.

Although it would probably be too much to say that the Associations actually joined forces with the great industries, it became fairly clear that these industries, during a long period of the Association's history, counted upon the Association as allies in the developing industrial struggle. Although the Associations aimed to maintain a place of neutrality and mutual confidence, as between labor and capital, there is lack of evidence that they were often actually able to do so.

There is very little, indeed, in the Y.M.C.A. record to reveal the degree of contact of young men who were members of this society with early labor organizations. The young men attracted to the early Associations were related to commercial and clerical employments mainly.

Those working in factory relationships were at least in the minority. It was earlier pointed out that only 12.1 per cent of the members of the Central Branch of the Chicago Association in 1900 were from skilled or unskilled labor groups, while more than 50 per cent from the clerical occupations.

During the 1850's and 60's there came into being the International Typographical Union (1850 or 1852), the National Trade Association of Hat Finishers (1854), the Iron-Molders' Union, and Machinists' and Blacksmiths' Union (both in 1859), the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers (1863), the Cigarmakers' National Union (1864), the Brick-layers' and Masons' International Union (1865), and thereafter many others. Many of these organizations were genuine expressions of the democratic impulses of the day, finding concern for education and civic objectives long since established in the prevailing culture, as well as those pertaining more specifically to purely economic aims, conditions of work, etc. Already there were instances of employer efforts to oppose "the pernicious and demoralizing tendency of these combinations," while the public interest in agitation for improved conditions (e.g., the movement to abolish the ten-hour day) revealed the character of the growing issue that was to affect working young men so significantly (15, p. 256).

Although the American Federation of Labor was begun in 1881 and achieved formal recognition by 1886, it was not until after 1900 that its membership became substantial. At the end of 1917 it was said to contain 111 national and international unions, 45 state federations, 762 central bodies, 845 local trade and federal labor unions, 26,761 local unions; and it had a membership of 2,371,434 (15, p. 802).

During these years of aggressive labor organization, Y.M.C.A. contacts with workers of most of the major industries were established along the broad lines of relationship in effect on the railway systems. Although the method of labor organization was not in itself of primary concern to an organization that had but minor contact with industrial workers, it was significant that the Associations' identification with industry failed so signally to recognize the type of concern that was at the same time being expressed in the trade-union movement. Despite this failure, however, the assumption that the Association could render an intermediary service between capital and labor was sustained by enough instances to give a degree of warrant to the claim. On the other hand, the almost complete absence of labor representatives on Association boards made it clear that this claim had no significant validity. An International Convention action in 1919 took note of this deficiency, and advocated promptly remedying it. But the situation did not greatly change in the years following the World War even until the present. The marked increases in the strength of organized labor following the great depression after 1929, and the factional warfare between the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organ-

izations for the past two years have found the Associations largely unconcerned with the issues represented, and relatively undisturbed by the conflict that has sharply divided the industrial constituency of the nation.

What can be said in summary, about the relationship of the economic background to the development of institutionalism in the Y.M.C.A.? Although the Association's rôle was relatively minor and incidental, it was in a sense symbolic of the whole economic life of the nation. The Association served the rank and file of a growing middle-class constituency that accepted both the ideologies and the services born of the industrial transformation of the common life. It apparently did so uncritically. The Association also sought to relate itself characteristically with those who controlled the economic destiny of the nation rather than to identify itself closely with those upon whose labors the vast increase of the wealth of the nation had been built up. The Association thus became increasingly identified with those of favored economic status, and tended to embody their conceptions of value and worth, of organization and relationship, of representation and control, within its own associated life. Repeatedly, while avowing interest and concern for those least favored, the Association characteristically left the provision of needed services very largely to other organizations and groups. Many came to designate the Association as essentially a middle-class organization. In associating its efforts toward the realization of the American dream, it had become perhaps too largely the medium and symbol of those for whom the dream had come true, and perhaps too little the resource and advocate for those to whom it had been denied.

## II. THE EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

No area of the life of the youthful republic could have been of greater concern to young men than the status of education. The young men who founded the local Young Men's Christian Associations could hardly have escaped the family discussions and community action of citizens upon whom for the first time the conception of a free public educational system was breaking. The pervading conceptions of liberalism and the belief in the worth and improbability of the common man that had accompanied the founding and early years of the American republic were undoubtedly shared by those who came into the early Association fellowships (17).

The period immediately preceding the formation of local Young Men's Christian Associations has been described as follows:

The second quarter of the nineteenth century may be said to have witnessed the battle for tax-supported, publicly controlled and directed, and non-sectarian common schools. In 1825 such schools were the distant hope of statesmen and reformers; in 1850 they were

becoming an actuality in almost every northern state. The twenty-five years intervening marked a period of public agitation and educational propaganda; of many hard legislative fights; or a struggle to secure desired legislation, and then to hold what had been secured; or many bitter fights with church and private-school interests, which felt that their "vested rights" were being taken from them; and of occasional referenda in which the people were asked, at the next election, to advise the legislature as to what to do. Excepting the battle for the abolition of slavery, perhaps no question has ever been before the American people for settlement which caused so much feeling or aroused such bitter antagonisms. Old friends and business associates parted company over the question, lodges were forced to taboo the subject to avoid disruption, ministers and their congregations often quarreled over the question of free schools, and politicians avoided the issue. The friends of free schools were at first commonly regarded as fanatics, dangerous to the state, and the opponents of free schools were considered by them as old-time conservatives or as selfish members of society (52, p. 164).

Only elementary or common-school education had been available to the children of the masses of the people. Education beyond this was ordinarily to be had only in semi-private tuition institutions. The first public high school had been established in Boston in 1821. The U. S. Commissioner of Education could report only 321 high schools in 1860. All but 35 of these were confined to states from Missouri and Iowa eastward. Over half of them were in the three states of Massachusetts, New York, and Ohio.

The National Educational Association, formed in 1857, marked an important step in the evolution of education and the teaching profession. It is possible that this body, originating so soon after the date of national organization of the Y.M.C.A. Confederation in 1854, indicated a tendency to national expression at least cognate to that which the Y.M.C.A. itself represented.

Everywhere the conviction grew that schooling should be compulsory rather than optional. The first modern compulsory-attendance law in the United States was adopted in Massachusetts in 1852. Nineteen other states and territories adopted such laws between 1864 and 1885, and nearly all other northern and western states did so by 1900 (52, p. 563).

From 1880 to 1900, while the population between the ages of five and seventeen increased 42.1 per cent, school attendance increased 57.1 per cent, and the total school expenditures increased 175.2 per cent. These considerable extensions presaged much larger increases to come. The interest was not limited to the public-school level, but was also evident in higher education. During the final decade of the century the number of college students increased by 59.2 per cent: the figure for women students being 73.5 per cent; that for men, 52.7 per cent.

Here also far greater gains lay just ahead. From 1900 to 1920 attendance in public education increased by more than 50 per cent, a rate much faster than school population, largely because of increasingly effective attendance laws. Educational expenditures increased fivefold. College students trebled during these twenty years.

Changes in the organization and professional understanding of the method and task of the new public education were significant for the Y.M.C.A. both because of the character of the experience through which young men and boys went in the schools and because of the effect of such changes upon the insights and methods of Association leaders. To Cubberly

the period following 1860 was a period of internal reorganization of our elementary education. . . . The school then became more clearly conscious of itself, and reorganized its teaching work along lines dictated by the new psychology of instruction which had come to us from abroad.

The thorough adoption of this new psychological point of view covered the period from 1860 up to about 1900. Beginning about 1880 to 1885, however, our schools began to experience a new but steady change in purpose and direction along lines of the new social and democratic forces, though it is only since about 1900 that any marked and rapid changes have set in.

The cities, as in practically all other educational advances, were the leaders in introducing these new subjects and in attempting to transform their schools from mere disciplinary institutions, where drill was given in the mastery of the rudiments of knowledge, into institutions of democracy calculated to train for useful service in the office, the shop and the home, and intended to prepare young people for intelligent participation in the increasingly complex social, political, and industrial life of our democratic society (52, p. 525).

Because of the enrichments and marked extension of public-school education, it may be assumed that young men and boys coming under Y.M.C.A. influence brought an already substantial training in citizenship ideals. Yet the schools were like the Associations, a product of the total social situation. It may be doubted whether the experience in either agency had adequately prepared young people for the exercise of any critical function regarding existing social institutions or trends. The schools were, to be sure, unlike the Associations, supported by taxation. Yet each was dependent upon public opinion, and necessarily tended to reflect prevailing social and economic attitudes. Despite this tendency it was evident that modern youth would face the future with a better preparation for participation in the life of a democracy than had those before them. The Associations would work henceforth with

the product of school effort, and mainly in supplementation thereto, although certain forms of competition might appear later.

The democratization of educational opportunity did not stop with the extension of public schools at secondary and college level, nor with the broadening of access to the established private colleges. It swept beyond these into a variety of novel informal educational organizations, and the Y.M.C.A., in keeping with the trend, became an educational agency. The needs of young men in the cities had long since arrested the attention of many types of literary and social organizations, some of which had set up libraries and reading rooms long before the Y.M.C.A. came into being. Of such activities carried on by Young Men's Mercantile libraries, Athenaeums, Young Men's Associations, and the like, the U. S. Bureau of Education reported in 1876 as follows:

The intimate original connection of the mercantile or young men's libraries with the general educational movement of the second quarter of this century was most evident in the feature, so common to all of the earliest time and still retained to a considerable extent, of a school, or at least of an educational department. This consisted most frequently of classes in such studies as bookkeeping, arithmetic, writing, and modern languages. Sometimes gymnasiums or classes in athletic exercise were added. The usual reading room has, in some cases, a chess room attached. In some instances, cabinets of minerals, coins, or other objects of interest have been begun, according to the tendency to the study of natural science when the young men's libraries began. Classes or societies for debate have been formed. Thus these institutions, instead of being like the earlier proprietary libraries or later free public libraries, confined to a single function of furnishing books to readers, were planned rather like a sort of business college, as if to furnish a general higher education to those who had not been able to go as far as desirable at school. The courses of lectures in connection with the mercantile libraries which have been a nearly constant feature, and are even more prominent than any of those just enumerated, arose from this same original school or collegiate character; for when these libraries began to be established, the public lectures, or "lyceum" lectures, as they are sometimes called, were supposed to be not merely entertainments as most of them now are, but actual courses of instruction (104).

Thus the essential pattern of informal education later employed by the Young Men's Christian Associations may be said to have been taken over largely from this type of supplementary education for out-of-school adults developed many years earlier. When so adapted as a part of the Association's own program, however, it was given wide extension in city Associations, and became the forerunner of night-school and other vocational training now widely offered as a part of the public educational system itself. First breaking from the pattern of existing formal education by creating this new type of education, the Associa-

tions tended, later on, to formalize these offerings under procedures and standards established among higher educational institutions by accrediting agencies, and through competition, to conform more and more to the patterns of training approved in such institutions (143).

The emphasis of the Associations upon the whole person, though mistakenly stressing his "fourfold" nature, represented in itself a significant pioneer point of view essentially educational in its implication and prophetic of much of the progressive educational emphasis of later years. Had the Associations fully developed the implications of this philosophy, as educational centers they might have followed the institutional patterns of education to greater degree than they did. Instead, they continued to be identified with the prevailing mentality and procedure of current economic life, and a conflict of patterns resulted. This conflict may for the moment be described as one between educational method and financial expediency, though there were other elements as well. As the Association came in later years to think of itself as an educational agency (p. 156ff.), the contrast between the demands of these two emphases became more marked, and their reconciliation more difficult. As the aim of public education became more inclusive as to scope of educational opportunity, the Association tended to become more selective. As the programs of both agencies of education expanded, they tended to become to some degree competitive.

It appears, then, that the Association tended to follow the developing ideologies, methods, and vogue of public education in the United States; that it benefited by the markedly favorable public opinion regarding the need for education; that it took a commendable part in demonstrating, even at an early date, the need for informal adult education in supplementation of organized schooling (61); and that it introduced and took a prominent if not leading part in popularizing what long after Professor L. P. Jacks called "the education of the whole man" (57).

### III. THE RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND

The historical relationship of the Associations to American Protestantism must never be forgotten. Not only were the early Associations composed primarily of young men who were members of Protestant evangelical churches, but Protestant conceptions dominated their activity. For example, as a method of extending their contacts, they created the category of "associate" member for others whom they hoped to induce to join these churches. In a land where church and state were separate, and where the Protestant tradition was pre-eminent and widespread among social and civic institutions, the conception of individual religious liberty and its adequacy was a common possession and essentially a part of the prevalent faith in democracy itself.

Influences toward materialistic thought coming chiefly from abroad,

and liberal attitudes that came to be expressed in Unitarian and Universalist doctrines, supported by literary and philosophical leaders in New England, undoubtedly played an influential part in establishing the early Y.M.C.A. as "evangelical." These forces clearly had influence in determining the original plan of organization of the Boston Association and the large number of Associations that patterned their organizations after it.

The early documents also reveal "Romanism" to have been a very present fear. The Protestant affiliation of the founding groups abroad and in America, and the pervading influence of Protestant conceptions in American political and social institutions generally, easily led to strong doubts about the appropriateness of Roman Catholic controls at any point in the social structure of the young democracy. The affirmative possibilities of interconfessional good will and co-operation under American democracy had to be discovered with the passing of the years.

Under such conditions, concern for the recruiting of other individuals to a similar belief and affiliation, through accepting some personal church connection, formed a logical and consistent aspect in a comprehensive ideological system that undergirded the practical relationships of the Association fellowship. There was apparently little, however, that was really original or novel in the organization of young men in modern America for Christian ends. Uniqueness, if any, may be found in their seeking to put their religious beliefs into practical application in the setting of their social life and work, and to develop within the complex environment of rapidly growing cities some distinctive expression of their own individuality and worth as persons. This they did based upon the principle of association in opposition to the forces of dissolution about them. They sought to make positive the friendships and influences that were undermining character and future.

Although these intimate forces worked toward the formation of persistent group associations, the original sources from which they sprang were lacking in unity. The outward swing of the denominational movement had not yet reached its limit, but was to continue for many years. The slavery issue had caused separation in certain communions some years before the Civil War (45). Long before 1850, differences in conscience and creed had resulted in a multiplication of denominations. The years from 1820 to 1850 had seen many minor sectarian groupings come into being within the bosom of the Baptist, Congregational, Friends, Presbyterian, Methodist, and Reformed churches. The young men who formed the Y.M.C.A.'s were members of these diverse and competing bodies. There is evidence that many of them did not accept as significant the distinctions that separated the denominations, and that they strongly believed in the cause of "union."

However, the full import of denominational difference cannot be understood merely in terms of withdrawing minority groups who strongly believed some special tenet. In a study of the social sources of

denominationalism, Dr. Richard Niebuhr has distinguished between the relatively transient character of what he calls "The Churches of the Disinherited" and the rise of the "Churches of the Middle Class." He considered the Methodist revival as the last great revolution of "the disinherited" in Christendom, and that

the revolutionary tendencies of the poor in the nineteenth century were almost completely secular in character, while in preceding eras they were always religious in character. The socialism of 1848 and later years was closely akin in many ways to Anabaptism and Quakerism, as well as to Lollardy and the Waldensian revolt. The conditions which preceded the rise of socialism were not dissimilar to those which formed the background of religious revolutions of previous centuries. There was present the actual exclusion of the poor from churches grown emotionally too cold, ethically too neutral, intellectually too sober, socially too aristocratic to attract men who suffered under the oppression of monotonous toil, of insufficient livelihood and the sense of social inferiority. In the century of inventions and of industrial production, in a time so largely occupied with the present world and its values, the absence of this social element from the preaching of the gospel was fatal to the religion of the disinherited (26, p. 72ff.).

The young men who came into the early Associations were for the most part already thus conditioned by their denominational backgrounds to a typically middle-class outlook as regarded matters of social and economic welfare. The gospel that they worked to support and extend had no clear philosophy around which to crystallize their enthusiasm and action concerning problems which the industrial revolution was swiftly bringing into being. They reflected the prevailing religious outlook of their day. From it they brought their traditional concepts over into the Y.M.C.A. relationships, and there these became established once again. Such views remained strong enough to resist any novel adaptation of the new Associations in relation to the social-economic forces which impinged upon them. In other respects, also, the Church as a social institution exhibited relationships and processes between persons that were subject to the same problems of adjustment as those Associations presented. A common social environment conditioned both. In concept and in practice, there was inter-relationship and inter-penetration between them (13).

There were also various early agencies of interdenominational activity such as the Sunday School Association, the Tract Society (which had begun about thirty years before the Y.M.C.A.), and the Evangelical Alliance, which had come more recently. These, with other groups centered in the temperance and abolition causes, were precedent for further exploratory experience by the new society, if not patterns for its development. But none of them became more than incidental to the

development of the Young Men's Christian Association, or particularly influential in shaping its policy.

However important these denominational and interdenominational backgrounds were in shaping the organization and establishing characteristic patterns of Association activity, there were broader influences playing upon both denominations and Associations, and serving to control their development. In a critical monograph covering the period 1875 to 1900, Dr. Arthur Meier Schlesinger mentions among such factors and influences, the doctrine of natural selection, the advent of textual criticism of the Scriptures commonly called "higher criticism," the growing tolerance of other faiths resulting largely from the missionary work abroad, the secularization of the Sabbath, and the development of the beginnings of a social policy on the part of the churches. Tracing in some detail the work of early scholars in both Old and New Testaments, Dr. Schlesinger noted the marked interest that accompanied the questioning of the "infallibility" of the Scriptures. He cites that when the revised version of the Bible appeared in 1881, two hundred thousand copies were sold in New York City in one week, and that it was printed in full by two Chicago newspapers. He comments upon the leadership given by certain liberal ministers, notably Washington Gladden of Columbus, concerning whose work he said,

Yet the reception accorded Washington Gladden's *Who Wrote the Bible?* published in 1891, indicates the broad appeal of the more advanced attitude. A summary and popularization of the newer studies, it not only enjoyed the largest sale of any of his widely read books, but became a manual for Bible classes and Young Men's Christian Associations (from Washington Gladden's *Recollections*, pp. 320-321). Sober reflection was convincing even many of the earlier objectors that if critical analysis stripped the Bible of its vesture of infallibility, it revealed it as a work of literary, spiritual and ethical power, a veritable book among books (32).

Religion and the scientific trend thus constituted during these years a most significant problem area for youth. It would be assuming too much to think that the average young man of the post-Civil War period held intellectual communion with many of the great minds that were coming to exert such profound influence in both Europe and America. Undoubtedly some of them read these writings, particularly as the abstract philosophers gave way to the scientific philosophers, who challenged prevailing views of life and faith in ways which, though sometimes caricatured in the mind of the common man, nevertheless interested him greatly. Three such names may be mentioned. Darwin's *Origin of Species* had been published in 1859, when already the problems created by evolutionary theory were stirring anxiety among all classes. John Stuart Mill lived to 1873. Herbert Spencer's *First Principles* in 1862, down to the completion of *Sociology* in 1898, had prac-

tically spanned the period of Association establishment in this country.

What would be the effect of the teachings of such leaders upon the young men of Protestant evangelical mind, whose religious zeal and sense of common need amidst the besetting environments of cities had brought the Associations into being? Could they accept and assimilate the central body of thought thus represented? Could they reconcile what they had done with what these teachings implied? Would they reject, and try to resist?

Mr. Wells, from the long perspective of his *Outline of History*, selects this problem and its impact as worthy of special examination. He writes:

It was only slowly that the general intelligence of the Western world was awakened to two disconcerting facts; first, that the succession of life in the geological record did not correspond to the acts of the days of creation; and, secondly, that the record, in harmony with a mass of biological facts, pointed away from the Bible assertion of a separate creation of each species straight towards genetic relation between all forms of life, *in which even man was included*. The importance of this last issue to the existing doctrinal system was manifest. If all the animals and man had been evolved in this ascendant manner, then there had been no first parents, no Eden, and no Fall. And if there had been no Fall, then the entire historical fabric of Christianity, the story of the first sin and the reason for an atonement, upon which the current teaching based Christian emotions and morality, collapsed like a house of cards. . . . It was with something like horror, therefore, that great numbers of honest and religious-spirited men followed the work [of Darwin]. . . . Many men and women are still living who can remember the dismay and distress among ordinary intelligent people in the Western communities as the invincible case of the biologists and geologists against the orthodox Christian cosmology unfolded itself. The minds of many resisted the new knowledge instinctively and irrationally. Their whole moral edifice was built upon false theory; they were too old and set to rebuild it; they felt the practical truth of their moral convictions, and this new truth seemed to them to be incompatible with that. They believed that to assent to it would be to prepare a moral collapse for the world. And so they produced a moral collapse by not assenting to it (44, p. 1109ff.).

The first pressures of these alarming views had been felt by the American religious community well in advance of the formal adoption of the "Evangelical Basis" by the Associations at Portland in 1869. Evidence exists regarding the fears there present among clergymen and others about the non-evangelical type of thought. That Convention was in no mood to accept or compromise with these doctrines of science as related to religion.

In a notable editorial article, unsigned, in *Harper's Monthly Magazine* in January, 1892, regarding the Young Men's Christian Association,

the writer includes what may be counted as a somewhat objective discussion of this point:

How for instance, could John Stuart Mill and William B. Gladstone have been fellow-members of a society designed to lead men to become Christians; or William E. Dodge and the most distinguished of American positivists? Unions grow out of some common sentiment, or principle of faith, and in a Christian Association the sentiment, or principle of faith, relates to Jesus Christ. These societies contemplate a bringing together of young men on the basis of certain relation of each one to Christ. . . . If this view is held by many Christian churches, then a union of the basis of it is not unreasonable. . . . [Quoting verbatim the Portland (1869) action, the writer calls it a] summary of the elementary principles of Protestantism [the basis upon which the original commonwealths (except Maryland) were founded, said] It cannot fairly be charged with narrowness; for it embodies the prevalent faith of Protestantism today.

Reference to European thinkers should not be allowed to obscure the fact that the influence of Americans such as Emerson was also already very great, and greatly feared by those who met at Portland to "fix" the religious identification of the Associations within current evangelical Protestant thought. Long before, in his Divinity School address in 1838, Emerson had advised the preachers "to revise their theology, and meet their hearers with original truths, not with traditional forms of religion."<sup>1</sup>

Yet to the popular mind engrossed in pursuit of the American dream these basic challenges to accepted religion strengthened resistance. Under the democratic modes of thought, the efficacy of prevailing denominational affiliation was not too seriously questioned. Men had a right to think as they chose—even to think wrongly. Centrifugal forces still made for creation of many new denominations during these years, along language lines among the Lutheran and Reformed churches, along racial lines in the Methodist body, and along doctrinal lines in lesser degree within the Baptist and Presbyterian bodies. Theological, social, and organizational institutionalism dominated the thought of churches old and new.

Robert Ingersoll, who lived until 1899, embodied the skepticism of those unbelievers who, absorbing whatever they could understand of the overthrow of traditional religious belief, made a gospel of their unbelief, and preached it with evangelical zeal and not without influence.

Meanwhile, the gradual invasion of science in its practical bearings worked its way everywhere, became commonplace, even a necessity. Whatever the contributions of science might mean for thought, they

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<sup>1</sup> *American Encyclopedia*, Vol. X, p. 238.

were useful and welcome for comfort and progress. The Protestant evangelical mind, although reserving its judgment or rejecting the claims of modern science in the realms of thought, was accepting evidence in the practical aspects of belief.

These matters were not passed over easily. Decades of inquiry and debate ensued. The period of transition required time, interpretation, adjustment. During this period the Associations broadened their ministry of contacts, changed their method, and adapted their philosophy—though to a large degree unknowingly.

The movement toward interdenominational co-operation was an important part of this transition. The Associations had quietly been training at least two generations of Protestant youth to work together. The emphasis had been upon practical Christian living rather than upon theology. These forces may have contributed something to the readiness of many great denominations to respond to the invitation in 1905 to create the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, and to co-operate with it in many significant activities down to the present time. Its adoption of a statement of Social Ideals in 1912, following preparatory action among various denominations, was an event of great social moment. However, the Associations, which were constantly seeking new ways to reaffirm and implement their historical relationship with the Protestant churches, did not at once subscribe to this statement of Social Ideals. Only in 1919 did they follow the churches' lead in this as in so many other matters.

The progress of liberal religious thought during these years may be said to have followed two trends: the one toward a vital modernism; the other toward a reconciliation between science and religion. Toward these influences, the Associations came to contribute effectively by publication of Bible studies and interpretative writings by Bosworth, Fosdick, and others, and by successfully promoting the wide study of these in the college and elsewhere. Representative leaders of religious thought were constantly brought into conference and other activities of the Associations. In certain formally promoted efforts, such as the Men and Religion Forward Movement about 1910, and the Laymen's Missionary Movement shortly afterward, the Associations contributed leaders and organization for impacts that must have had some considerable influence upon American religious thought. Even the great community financial campaigns previously described had their spiritual significance in many communities.

Religious thought since the World War has represented in itself a field of marked confusion and contradiction, in which the Associations have necessarily shared. It is the duty of religion to assert its function of furnishing the ultimate criteria of life, and to seek to be instrumental in the processes of desirable social change. But organized religion in the United States has naturally reflected the deeply believed principle of democratic faith and, in consequence, has shown the utmost diversity.

The challenge to all faiths from the social conditions about them has usually seemed sufficient, it is true, to direct their energies into broadly co-operative channels rather than against one another. But the free order of Protestant denominationalism has never been able to ensure effective unity back of its special tenets, nor to prevent the characteristic economic influences of the times from dominating their expression. It was only with difficulty that the Protestant denominations (and not all of them) found it possible to come together in the loose federation of the Federal Council. However, by 1912, they had made their social ideals clear in at least one significant document of social faith. In more recent years they have been alert in programs of investigation, publication, conference, and advocacy that have given a new sense of direction to Protestant effort. But the rise of modern interpretation, termed Modernism, found vigorous opposition in the vogue of Fundamentalism. Some denominational groups were split in twain by these discussions; heresy trials were conducted; and belief in human efforts and values discredited as "humanism." Over long decades, while conservative doctrines held sway in all churches, the social maladjustments were sharply increasing. Recent unfavorable social trends were charged in part against religious liberalism. Strong efforts were made among leaders of liberal thought to reassert the case for a rational yet vital faith. The Associations also felt the force of controversy, though not of division, to any considerable degree. In the main, through publication and interpretation, they buttressed the cause of a vital liberalism during an important transition of religious thought in America.

As a practical union of Christians, the Association reflects the growing interest in church union. The impressive steps taken toward Protestant church union in Canada were largely without counterpart in the United States, except for instances of reunion by denominational "families," e.g., among Presbyterian groups, and among the three great branches of Methodism. But the 1937 gatherings of Protestant and Eastern Orthodox Churches at Oxford and Edinburgh, and the plans for a World Council of Churches, stirred the minds of communicants with possibilities of formal union based upon the desire to show a "united front" against secular evils in the world arena that appear about to overwhelm formal religion altogether.

In summary, it is evident that the Associations, in founding their own union upon the practical co-operation of Christian young men rather than upon theological doctrines, avoided one characteristic cause of institutional retardation. However, they erected another kind of institutionalism in its place. Decisive support of urgent social causes was held back by thought of what it might do to the organization itself. Courses of action were frequently devised and later rationalized that lay around or between issues. In so doing, Association leaders were but repeating in the Association relationships what they had already practised in church and other relationships.

Moreover, the Associations have not been able to clarify their religious aims, which continue to reflect the conflicting religious thought currents of the times. Until they are able to do so, it may be doubted whether they will be able to deal more vigorously and directly than heretofore with social conditions and individual need. Unless social and religious goals become explicit, group activity programs are likely to remain scattered and ineffective. The development of a consensus regarding such goals among so diverse and wide-spread a constituency is a task of great difficulty and one that must continue to test the genius and leadership of the Association. To the patterns of financial expediency and educational methodology previously mentioned must be added that of the practical religious devotion of laymen. These constitute determining elements of the institutional expressions that came to characterize the Young Men's Christian Association.

#### IV. THE COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

The Young Men's Christian Association has been inseparably identified with the American community. The changing local community has been the microcosm of the changing culture that has formed the background of nearly ninety years of Association development in the United States. The patterns of behavior that have become established in the life of the community have undoubtedly had close relationship to the institutional patterns that arose within the Association itself. The Association sought to keep pace with the growth of cities, and reflected their complexity and uniqueness.

"Any circle of people who live together, who belong together, so that they share, not this or that particular interest, but a whole set of interests wide enough and complete enough to include their lives, is a community," says Professor MacIver. "Thus we may designate as a community a tribe, a village, a pioneer settlement, a city, or a nation. The mark of a community is that one's life *may* be lived wholly within it, that all one's social relationships *may* be found within it. . . . We may live in a metropolis and yet be members of a very small community because our interests are circumscribed within a narrow area. We may live in a village and yet belong to a community as wide as the whole area of our civilization or even wider. No civilized community has walls around it to cut it off from a larger one. . . . A community . . . is always a group occupying a territorial area. One basis of its coherence is locality. . . . Most communities are settled and derive from the conditions of their abode a strong bond of solidarity. . . . The importance of the conception of community is in large measure that it reveals the relation between social coherence and the geographical area. Although this relation has been modified by civilization, yet 'the basic character of locality as a social classifier has never been transcended'" (22, p. 10).

Constant reference has been made in the preceding chapters to the

American city. The founding of the early Associations could hardly have been understood at all apart from an appreciation of the almost nation-wide movement of young men from the open country in to the cities. Yet, Professor Ogburn has commented, "cities are the most artificial habitat man has yet lived in. The environment of a city is radically different from that of the farmer and of the hunter, an occupation man followed for many hundreds of thousands of years—long enough to become adapted to it. It is only within the past few generations that significant proportions of the human race have lived in the strange environment of cities, to which they have not become adapted satisfac-

TABLE XXIX  
DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION IN URBAN AND RURAL TERRITORY BY POPULATION  
CLASSIFICATION FOR THE YEARS 1890 TO 1930 INCLUSIVE\*

	1930	1920	1910	1900	1890
In Urban Territory.....	56.2	51.4	45.8	40.0	35.4
Places 1,000,000 or More.....	12.3	9.6	9.2	8.5	5.8
Places 500,000 to 1,000,000.....	4.7	5.9	3.3	2.2	1.3
Places 250,000 to 500,000.....	6.5	4.3	4.3	3.8	3.9
Places 100,000 to 250,000.....	6.1	6.2	5.3	4.3	4.4
In Cities of 100,000 or More...	29.6	26.0	22.1	18.8	15.4
Other Urban Territory.....	26.6	25.4	23.7	21.2	20.0
In Rural Territory.....	43.8	48.6	54.2	60.0	64.6

\*From World Almanac for 1937, p. 250.

torily, for the death rate and the crime rate are higher in the city than in the country. They do not breed well in the city, either, for the birth rate is lower there. But city life is fascinating, whether one approves of it or not, and with the economic advantages it offers, men and women leave the farms for the city and will continue to do so until a much larger proportion of us live in urban communities" (29, p. iii).

The rapid rise of the city has been one of the outstanding characteristics of American social development during the past century. The number of urban communities and the proportion of the population living in them have steadily increased. In 1930, as Table XXIX shows, 56.2 per cent of the population were living in urban territory, that is, in communities of 2,500 or more. The proportion of the population found at each of the last five census enumerations, according to size of city, contributes significant facts toward the understanding of the tendency of the Y.M.C.A. to manifest exceptional growth in the cities.

The table shows not only that the urban population has grown rapidly since 1890, as it had previously, but that the proportion of the population in cities of 100,000 or more had nearly doubled during these forty years. The larger cities were outstripping the rest.

An examination was made of the population growth of 62 cities

that had 100,000 population or more in 1930, and which also had provided reports in the Census of 1850 and for each subsequent one. According to Table XXX, these cities had an aggregate population of 2,325,000 in 1850, as against a population of 30,646,329 in 1930, a gain of more than thirteenfold as against a gain of a little more than fivefold for the population as a whole. For these 62 cities, the table indicates the dates of origin of the respective local Associations and in most instances the date of erection of the first building built and occupied for Association purposes. This table graphically suggests the task that

TABLE XXX  
DATES OF ORIGIN OF Y.M.C.A.'S AND OF FIRST BUILDINGS ERECTED FOR  
ASSOCIATION PURPOSES FOR 62 AMERICAN CITIES HAVING, IN 1930,  
100,000 OR MORE POPULATION

	1930	1920	1910	1900	1890	1880	1870	1860	1850
Aggregate Population in 1,000's for 62 Cities..	30,503	25,177	20,086	15,307	11,474	8,053	5,958	4,105	2,325
Per cent Based on 1850 as 100.....	1,318	1,088	869	664	496	348	257	176	100
Gain (1,000's) over Preceding Census.....	5,326	5,091	4,779	3,983	3,421	3,095	1,853	1,780	.....
Per cent of Gain over Preceding Census....	18.2	17.4	16.3	13.4	11.7	10.6	6.0	6.0	.....
Number of Associations Organized Preceding Decade.....	.....	.....	1	.....	11	11	11	28	(Total) 62
Per cent of Associations Organized Preceding Decade.....	.....	.....	1.7	.....	17.7	17.7	17.7	45.2	100.0
Number of First Buildings Preceding Decade.....	.....	1	9	16	28	5	3	....	62
Per cent of First Buildings Preceding Decade	.....	1.7	14.5	25.7	45.3	8.0	4.8	....	100.0

confronted these Associations, among others, in attempting to keep pace with such rapid rates of population growth and to adapt their work to the changing needs.

The emergence of the larger city has had a profound influence upon the economic and social life of the people. It has been stated that in 1931 "fully one-half of the people of this country now live within an hour's motor journey from a city of 100,000 or more," and that "three-quarters of the national increase in population between 1920 and 1930 took place within the immediate orbits of these larger cities" (28, p. 492).

Not only does each city represent a great complexity of problems within its own community life, but

Each great city has its sphere of influence. By laying out these spheres on a map of the United States . . . it is possible to divide the whole nation into metropolitan regions which economically and socially have greater reality than the several states. . . . At the same time each is likely to be affected in its life by one of the inter-regional metropolises, especially New York or Chicago. Each is increasingly aware of its economic and social unity, yet each tends to imitate the larger centers culturally. Thus the great cities pre-

serve many differences arising from their history, their geographical location, the nature of their population and their sources of livelihood, but they also tend toward cultural uniformity (28, p. 444).

The same report concluded that

The past decade has definitely witnessed the emergence of a new population and functional entity—the metropolitan community or super-city. So far as can be seen this new entity will characterize our national urban life for an indefinite time to come. The next decade may be expected to bring about further efforts to digest it into the economic, governmental, and cultural pattern of the nation (28, p. 496).

The Association early realized the challenge of this metropolitan development, and adapted organization structures and buildings to provide branches with separate service centers located in sections or neighborhoods of the greater city. This did not necessarily imply, however, that the Association understood or took due account of many other implications of the growth of larger metropolitan communities for the cultural life of the nation.

Two contrasting implications will be mentioned. Among these were the Association's own need for substantial financial connections if it was to plant branch buildings in many sections of these cities, and its ability to secure necessary backing in the powerful banking centers, which were inevitably a part of these metropolitan communities. Another unforeseen implication lay in the very special needs of interstitial areas of such cities, where pockets of humanity were left between growing industrial and residential areas and were largely abandoned by religious and other groups. In this field, subsequently the social settlements and institutional churches came into being, following the pattern set by the first settlements in this country, the Neighborhood Guild in New York in 1886, and Hull House in Chicago, in 1889. Four such novel centers were established by 1890. They increased rapidly after the panic of 1893. By 1895 there were fifty of them in northern and western cities (33, p. 352). It was out of the heat and struggle of this creative effort that the appeal of Dr. Graham Taylor of Chicago Commons came to the Y.M.C.A. at its International Convention in 1895—an appeal largely rejected. With only rare exceptions, the Association in the growing city centers did not tend to identify its interest and work typically with the depressed or neglected areas and their people. It placed its buildings typically at the city crossroads. There it sought to maintain an approach to all groups; but actual conditions were certain to be selective economically, socially, and, to a considerable extent, religiously.

There were many different types of communities; and, as preceding chapters have shown, the Association tended to identify itself with all of them. Lindeman classified communities as follows (19, p. 40):

Urban Communities  
     Industrial  
     Commercial-financial  
     Political  
 Suburban  
     Industrial cities and towns  
     Agricultural cities or towns  
     Educational towns or villages  
     Villages  
 Open-country communities

To the extent that it did so identify itself with communities of different types, the Association exhibited an adaptive capacity not without considerable significance. It may be assumed that events in the various types of community result in time in some definite patterns of behavior among the people composing such communities. The Y.M.C.A., the very genius of which lay in the principle of association, chose a device that has proven effective without regard to the specific character of the environment. Yet were Y.M.C.A.'s as likely to be found in one type of city as another? To answer this question a recent investigation of Ogburn was examined. He had sought the distinguishing characteristics of trading centers, factory towns, transportation centers, mining towns, pleasure resorts, health resorts, and college towns (29, p. iii). Recognizing for the purpose of his study the multiform character of the very large centers, he chose those having populations up to 50,000 with fairly obvious circumstances permitting their classification under the headings above with regard to some specialization. He asserted that "the degree of specialization is probably less when measured than is the popular opinion of it." The actual specialization is contrasted, in the Ogburn study, with "the average city" in this country with respect to what the people do, who they are, how much they earn, family circumstances, taxes paid, and many other specific items. For the present study, the detailed differentia thus revealed are not so significant as an inquiry concerning the relationship of the Y.M.C.A. to these various types of cities.

Table XXXI exhibits some of these relationships for the cities included in the Ogburn study. It will be observed that the trading factory and transportation centers represent appreciably larger populations than do the mining towns, pleasure resorts, health resorts, and college towns. This may largely account for the substantially smaller proportion of the latter that have Associations. Undoubtedly there are many concomitant factors also, such as economic ability, which may affect the ability of some of these cities to support work with buildings according to the prevailing conceptions of city Association work. Financial and membership data from most of the local Associations in these cities indicate a very much larger number of members (typically among the trading, factory, and transportation centers) in relation to population, and

a correspondingly lower amount of expenditures per thousand of population. The number of Associations at work in mining, pleasure, and health centers is relatively small. The data reported are somewhat less reliable. But for those reported, the budget expenditures per thousand of population are from two to three times as great as in the other cities. In the twenty-one college towns, the population of which averages 16,300, only two of the "city" type of Associations exist. (Many of these schools have student Y.M.C.A.'s, but these rarely reach any part of the resident community.) In these two college towns, however, budget expenditures per thousand of population are more nearly similar to

TABLE XXXI  
CHARACTERISTIC FACTORS RELATING TO Y.M.C.A. DEVELOPMENT  
IN DIFFERENT TYPES OF CITIES

	TRADING CENTERS	FACTORY TOWNS	TRANSPO- RATION CENTERS	MINING TOWNS	PLEASURE RESORTS	HEALTH RESORTS	COLLEGE TOWNS
Number of Cities Studied..	23	36	26	30	17	13	21
Average Population (1930).	53,400	50,100	44,600	15,600	12,300	15,200	16,300
Number Having Y.M.C.A.'s	18	29	23	6	8	4	2
Per cent Having Y.M.C.A.'s	78.3	80.6	88.5	20.0	47.5	30.8	9.9
Data Available from.....	16	28	18	4	8	4	2
"Y." Budget Expenditures (in 1937) per Thousand of Population.....	\$785	\$909	\$808	\$1,595	\$2,509	\$1,888	\$732
"Y." Members (in 1937) per Thousand of Popula- tion.....	21.5	26.5	20.2	14.1	7.2	13.6	15.6
"Y." Members (in 1937) per 1,000 of Expenditure	27.6	29.1	26.2	8.9	2.9	7.3	2.1

those of the first group though the membership ratio is substantially lower. When membership is compared with expenditures, these college communities and the pleasure resorts drop far below the health resorts and mining towns; while these are in turn less than one-third compared to the trading, factory, and transportation centers.

From this simple analysis, it is apparent that certain factors, possibly related to the economic aspect, exert great influence in determining whether or not Associations ever become established in these various types of cities. Apparently they are more likely to become established in the commercial, factory, and transportation centers than in mining centers, pleasure and health resorts, or college communities. It is held by certain writers that economic forces usually determine the character of the community (19, p. 40). Yet it would also appear that in certain of these communities studied, the problem is not so much whether financial support is available as some other factor affecting the affiliation of members. There may possibly be ideological factors at work related to the desire for association or the lack of it. Regimes of benevolence or of feudal, or latterly "fascist," control undoubtedly affect the attitude of young men toward the desirability of organization and the programs undertaken (20).

Differences of racial or religious background sometimes affect a particular community's interest in such an organization as the Young Men's Christian Association, with its long-standing Protestant identification. These sharply drawn cleavages are not revealed in the quantitative relationships of population. These and other significant group differences tended to be overlooked by those who, like President Woodrow Wilson, felt that it was possible to judge the American community by the degree of its interest in the Young Men's Christian Association (p. 125). It was inevitable that a broader basis of reference would be required than the response given to the status and program of any particular organization. A broader conception of community need was in process of evolving parallel to the rise of the American city under the industrial regime. The relationship of the Young Men's Christian Association to this growing concern is perhaps a more significant aspect than its activity pattern at any given time or in any particular type of community, for the concern arises direct from the people, and has to do with their need as it is, rather than with any given institutional pattern.

The problems that accompanied the rise of the American city baffled the ability and moral sense of the nation. As the city arose from the necessities of the production, processing, and distribution of the natural and human resources with which the American nation was so richly endowed, it came to symbolize also the frailty of human nature, the insolence of human greed, the corruption of human habitation, and still also the power of associated human effort. The physical necessities of increasing population centers required new processes necessary to the maintenance of life itself: food, water, lighting, and housing, health, and safety services. In each of these, in turn, the spectacle of selfishness and exploitation arose. Crime and corruption flourished. Bold pioneers came forward—Josiah Strong, Washington Gladden, Jacob Riis, and many more—to challenge the conscience of citizen and churchmen; and to lay foundations of constructive civic effort and reform. It may be noted with some satisfaction that to at least some degree leaders such as these were known to and co-operated with by the Associations; and were generally counted by them as allies in community effort.

It must be recognized, however, that the forces that were creating the community culture were stronger than all of such efforts, which continued to develop within specialized areas of the culture without markedly influencing its actual character and direction. The emergence of the social method of philanthropy, obviously closely related to the acquisition of large fortunes among the economically strong, became an approved form of restitution on behalf of those economically weak. The preceding chapters have indicated many ways in which the Associations became the beneficiaries of such philanthropy. That philanthropy came in time to seek and apply its vast resources to social need was in itself an evidence of the development of the social mind, in each

community on a small scale, and in the larger national community as well.

But even when it was used to rationalize extreme differences in socio-economic status and to justify the acquisition of wealth, philanthropy was not so significant as the "humanitarian striving" that accompanied "the quest for social justice" during most of the decades since the Civil War (14). Philanthropy could not by itself be expected to identify the causes that underlie social need, nor to lead in their eradication. In applying its resources to existing programs, such as those of the Young Men's Christian Association, it tended to support those enterprises that appeared to undergird personal character and a philosophy of acceptance, rather than a more critical point of view regarding social causes. In later years, philanthropy turned more especially to investigative and experimental programs, many of which have been closely concerned with more fundamental processes. There is little, however, in publications or formal evidence of policy, to suggest economic adjustments by which people may be relieved of their daily anxiety about subsistence.

Thus the growing public outlook of the citizenship has turned to participation in determining public policy as against dependence upon a more paternalistic and private method. The community, as a municipality, has been compelled to face the daily needs of startling proportions of its citizens. This necessity has aroused new alignments among the people; and has strengthened the long feeble sense of interdependence among all groups of the people. Organizations such as the Y.M.C.A. have not been aloof from these major developments. They have sought to make available to emergent social needs such facilities and leadership as they have had. In general, however, it cannot be said that the Associations as such have offered any specific or distinctive proposals for the alleviation of the more aggravated aspects of social need at any given period, relying rather upon their traditional contribution to individual character as their most widely approved method of service.

As the pattern of social interdependence has emerged, more through the experience of social tension and distress than through planned economy, the fact of the national community itself has been recognized. The processes of communication, information, and travel, have given mobility and perspective to all persons; and have tended to make them more aware of what may be done together. The roots of localism are deep. Patterns of autonomy in education and social work are as firmly established as are those of individualism in economics or of freedom in democracy and in religion. But the local community processes have inevitably become a part of the total pattern, and conditioned by it. Local municipalities are now rarely able to hold elections apart from determination by national political issues. Local community relief programs have grown beyond the ability of any single community to meet. Educational policies essential to the continuance of democracy

have been traditionally a local responsibility. They are able to yield tardily and stubbornly, if at all, to the need for equalization of educational opportunity by which less favored areas may receive essential schooling. Yet the broader appreciation is slowly dawning. Even the religious groups, long rent asunder by creedal differences and oppressed by the traditional impotence of their division, are beginning to turn toward a more co-operative union of effort. In recent months even a world-wide Christian community has been glimpsed anew and the conception of "the commonwealth of God" repeatedly set forth as the logical goal of associated effort among the local Associations and groups.

Dynamic forces in the current life of the local, national, and world community once again illustrate how unable any agency is to ignore the community background in its own development. The unsolved problems of human need, the multiplication of agencies (p. 171), the confusion of methods, and the increased functioning of government in social welfare, all help to define more sharply the problem of both community organization and agency service. A concentration of factors tends to demand forms of agency behavior that meet with community approval. This conformity to what is expected is the ready material of institutionalism. How far, and by what means, may it be possible to relate in a fresh and authentic manner such established modes of Association institutional activity as financial expediency, educational methodology, and religious devotion in a common plan of social action? As a voluntary association, these particular characters, and many others, had emerged through long-standing practice as institutional forms. How were they accommodated, if at all, to the more recent sense of community interdependence?

## V. THE PLACE OF THE VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATION IN AMERICAN CULTURE

The conception of the voluntary association has become central in the historical analysis of the Y.M.C.A. in the preceding chapters. It requires explicit examination, at this point, as a definite feature of the social context within which the Association Movement has developed.

Freedom to come together and give effect to an interest held in common represents a basic social method applicable in any field and at least potentially powerful in all. Men are indeed social beings, and by nature gregarious. Persons readily form groups by which to pursue some common interest and to provide the conditions of support and approval by which individual personality receives social discipline and achieves maturity. The voluntary association is thus an essential expression of social living, and to a varying degree, of the experience of each individual in it. These expressions, though social in nature, may become trivial or even anti-social in effect. Sir James Bryce noted that

The power of groups of men organized by incorporation as joint

stock companies, or of small knots of rich men acting in combination, has developed with unexpected strength in unexpected ways, overshadowing individuals and even communities, and showing that the very freedom which men sought to secure by law when they were threatened with the violence of potentates may under the shelter of the law ripen into a new form of tyranny (*8*, p. 407).

Potent, also, are the appeals to individuals to move together toward the securing of ends held in common, or to remedy the conditions held injurious.

It was such a spirit which moved over the 52 young men who assembled at Cincinnati in 1855, representing 22 Associations from every part of the country. Among others, they heard an "annual address" delivered by the Reverend C. M. Butler, rector of Christ Church (Episcopal) of that city, in which he forcefully interpreted the social setting surrounding the new youth movement known as the Young Men's Christian Association:

We live, he said, in an age and land in which the powers of evil are not slothful, passive and hemmed in; but wakeful, watchful, bold, active, energetic and free, even to license, to speak and act, and spread forth their fatal fascinations. To be met successfully, they must be countered by a spirit of equally determined, brave, and energetic loyalty to God and duty. Never were there such rewards to industry! Never such lures to ambition! Never such facilities and temptations to dishonesty. Never were so many minds fretted into discontent with ordinary prosperity, and stimulated into rash and unrighteous enterprises. Never such golden fields open to adventure. Never such plausible theories of infidelity and vice. Never so many influences at work to break up home-training and systematic moral and religious culture, and to throw increasing multitudes into the midst of the most exciting, dissipating, and corrupting associations.

From abroad we receive with many valuable accessions of moral and industrious population, a vast and steady tide of the worthless, the brutal, and the degraded. With them come the educated, with theories of civil license, which are the reaction of minds which have smarted under cruel despotisms; with theories of infidelity, which are the far rebound of the outraged sense from the monstrous dogmas of the Church of Rome; with theories of morals which put impulse in the place of conscience, dissolve the family relation, and look to the destruction of modesty and self-control as the inauguration of a millennium of purity and love.

From all these votaries of worldliness and all these soft and sentimental theories, comes the cry that Christianity is an effete tradition or a myth, and that the Church is a failure and a sham. They point to our splendid churches and our artistic music; and then they point to the masses of the poor, the ignorant, the degraded, the uninstructed, all around us, and ask in scorn if this is

the system which is to regenerate the world and lift humanity from the dust.

Such are the influences which the Christian of our day is to meet and thwart; such are the errors he is to confute; such are some of the false and such, I grieve to say, some of the not unfounded, imputations cast upon our practical Christianity, which he is here to confute and remove. In this great work, Associations like yours have a most momentous part to bear (1855, p. 41).

It was to such a challenge that the young men of the early decade sought, through associating their efforts in the Young Men's Christian Associations, to respond. Undoubtedly there was a considerable degree of self-protection in what they did, without much reflection upon the needs in communities of general or any long-view strategy as to what was needed in the culture of America as a whole. Lacking the insight, experience, and perspective for such a task, they concentrated upon the conditions near at hand that most affected them, and there they found plenty to do. In New York City, for example, they made a private investigation, in 1866, of conditions of life among the young men, publishing a confidential report under the title "A Memorandum Respecting New York as a Field of Moral and Christian Effort Among Young Men, its Present Neglect, and the Fitness of the New York Young Men's Christian Association as a Principal Agency for Its Due Cultivation." Among the items included in this report were the following:

A male population between the ages of fifteen and forty of 181,592; prominence of strangers; the diversion of attention by employers from the social and moral interests of young men; the general inadequacy of salaries to the cost of living; the increased exclusiveness of society; herding of the virtuous and vicious in boarding houses to which they are driven by limited income.

Billiard saloons having 653 tables; thirteen theaters with an income from four of them of \$665,500 per year; gambling halls and places on almost every street where lottery tickets and policies might be obtained; 7,786 licensed porter houses and bar-rooms, with a daily consumption of 600 barrels of spirits; obscene books and papers to be obtained at very many newspaper stands; 223 concert saloons employing 1,197 water girls, prostitutes with few exceptions, attracting 22,900 daily visitors, principally young men; at present, 730 houses of prostitution and assignation, sheltering 3,400 females.

The proportion of young men who attend services is much less than that of any other class of the population. A most inconsiderable number are within reach of these religious influences. Other causes than mere insufficiency of room operate to restrict the attendance; the exclusiveness, more or less necessary, largely prevailing among the regular attendants of many of the churches; the lack of social feeling and sympathy which has largely increased during the past few years; the cost of sittings in the more attractive churches;

the unattractive character of many others where the price of sittings is more moderate (*152*, p. 76).

The survey stated that the Young Men's Christian Association was at the time the only organization in the city that contemplated work in the special field of young men, and set forth plans for a new type of building designed to attract them. Thus the very form of this building was itself largely determined by the social environment, and became a pattern for similar efforts not only by Y.M.C.A.'s, but by many other types of organizations such as settlements, schools, and churches.

Voluntary associations were, of course, not recent social innovations. The Young Men's Christian Association was far from the first of this type of organization. Mention is made of various societies in England from 1632 on, some of which became influential and winning the approval of high clergy (*116*, p. 30ff.). One such society was organized at Taunton, Massachusetts, in 1705. Mention is made of "Societies for the Reformation of Manners," growing from the English groups above referred to, which were said to have been active in 1691 in the suppression of vice by legal means. In New England, Cotton Mather in 1710 commented on the existence of several of the religious societies under the name of "Young Men Associated"; John Wesley himself reported his experiences in such groups in this country about 1729. More wide-spread and of more direct significance in America was the work of David Naismith, who came on a visit from England about 1830 and founded some seventy societies under his own name (*84*). Many of these did not continue in successful operation for a long period of time; but some did so continue, and later became Y.M.C.A.'s as at Montreal.

These relatively modern moral and religious societies were but recent instances of the long procession of Christian brotherhoods, including the monastic orders, which have been active from the early Christian era down to the present (*80*). In his study of early Christian student associations (*108*, p. 1), Professor Shedd concluded that "in all ages the great creative religious ideas have been the achievement of the intellectual and spiritual insight of young men." He not only scans the pages of history for specific characters in support of this thesis, but examines in detail the "student religious societies," especially in the United States, from 1700 down to the present time. From the writings of Cotton Mather onward, Shedd has composed a fairly complete account of what must have been a general tendency of such societies to associate their interests through both local and intercollegiate organization in pursuit especially of evangelistic and missionary objectives. Numerous such societies were in existence a century and more before the first student Y.M.C.A.'s were formed in 1858, and long before these came together in intercollegiate organization in 1877 (*108*, Chs. I-V).

In the same way, Young Men's Associations and Young Men's

Mercantile Associations antedated the advent of Young Men's Christian Associations in 1851 in this country. One such organization was founded at Albany in 1833, and incorporated in 1835 as "the Young Men's Association for Mutual Improvement." Its stated purpose was "establishing and maintaining a library, reading room, literary and scientific lectures, and other means of promoting moral and intellectual improvement, with power for such purposes to take by purchase, devise, or otherwise, and to hold, transfer and convey real and personal property to the amount of fifty thousand dollars," etc. In 1841, this society was in its ninth year, and had 1,220 members. It is evident that voluntary associations were active before the advent of Y.M.C.A.'s, and that the latter, although working along similar lines, considered their religious purpose as Christians as significant and perhaps novel aspect of both their motivation and method of work.

It is evident that many types of voluntary associations were active before Y.M.C.A.'s came into existence. Among such previous and contemporary associations, it appears that early Y.M.C.A.'s regarded significantly their religious purpose as Christians. Their practical services as young laymen working without reference to denominational affiliation or theological distinctions they considered unique and important.

In a series of recent studies by the American Youth Commission, under the sponsorship of the American Council on Education, dates of origin are given for a number of national organizations, such as the Young Men's Christian Association, which offer programs among American youth. In Table XXXII these organizations are separated with reference to the year 1900, but classified in accordance with the Commission's own report. These highly varied types of voluntary organizations, in most instances technically "great associations" made up of large numbers of local units and chapters, reveal the variety and comprehensiveness of the efforts by which groups of persons have sought to associate their individual strength toward purposes of fellowship, education, correction. In each instance, and notably in the case of those organized since 1900, they have directed their attention toward some phase of modern civilization that they believed could be benefited or corrected by this approach, without regard to the function of the state itself in relation thereto.

The rapid multiplication of private charitable, social, educational, recreational, and religious agencies, all of them voluntary associations, emphasizes the facility with which social needs find response in new unions of individuals for social co-operation. Like the early Y.M.C.A.'s before them, they were all confronted, however, by the familiar problems of structure and function, and seek ways by which to develop institutional forms that will advance their objectives without later retarding their greatest social usefulness.

The multiplication of such organizations of youth and of persons concerned for youth's welfare has latterly directed attention to the need

for new forms of co-ordination such as Councils of Social Agencies in the local community to facilitate effective coverage and economy. Notable among the more recent instrumentalities is the Community Chests

TABLE XXXII  
DATES OF NATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF YOUTH-SERVING  
ORGANIZATIONS WITH REFERENCE TO THE YEAR 1900, FROM THE SURVEY  
BY THE AMERICAN YOUTH COMMISSION

BEFORE 1900	SINCE 1900
<i>(General Character-Building Organizations for Youth)</i>	
1866 Y.M.C.A.'s of U. S.*	1906 Boys' Clubs of America
1886 American Ethical Union	1910 Boy Scouts of America
1894 United Boys' Brigades	1912 Camp Fire Girls
1906 Y.W.C.A. National Board (Originated 1858)	1912 Girl Scouts
	1913 Boy Rangers of America
	1914 Boys' Brotherhood Republic
	1914 Pathfinders of America
	1917 Big Brother and Big Sister Federation
	1919 Junior Achievement
	1919 Order of Demolay
<i>(Protestant Religious Youth-Serving Organizations)</i>	
1877 Girls' Friendly Society	1912 Int. Council of Religious Education
1881 International Society of Christian Endeavor	1934 National Council of Methodist Youth
1883 Brotherhood of St. Andrew	
1886 King's Daughters and Sons	
1888 Student Volunteer Movement	
1889 Epworth League	
1891 Baptist Young People's Union	
1895 Luther League of America	
1896 Order of Sir Galahad	
<i>(Patriotic, Political, Fraternal, Labor Organizations)</i>	
1881 American Federation of Labor	1905 League for Industrial Democracy
	1919 American Legion
	1924 Pioneer Youth of America
	1935 American Youth Congress
<i>(Guidance and Placement Organizations)</i>	
	1912 National Vocational Guidance Association
	1925 American Vocational Association
	1933 National Occupational Conference
	1934 Amer. Coun. of Guidance and Pers. Ass'n's
<i>(Leisure-Time and Recreational Associations)</i>	
	1906 National Recreational Association
	1922 National Amateur Athletic Association
	1924 American Camping Association
	1934 Junior Birdmen of America
<i>(Health and Safety Organizations)</i>	
1872 American Public Health Association	1904 National Tuberculosis Association
	1909 National Committee for Mental Hygiene
	1914 American Social Hygiene Association
<i>(Social Work)</i>	
	1911 Family Welfare Association
	1911 National Federation of Settlements
	1918 Community Chests and Councils
1865 Salvation Army	1920 National Social Work Council
1870 National Conference of Social Work	1922 American Association of Social Workers
1881 American Red Cross	1930 American Public Welfare Association
<i>(Child Welfare, Delinquency, Crime)</i>	
	1904 National Child Labor Committee
	1907 National Probation Association
	1921 Child Welfare League
<i>(Miscellaneous Groups)</i>	
	1931 Allied Youth
	1933 American League Against War and Fascism

\*Refers to the year in which the national Executive Committee created in 1854 was located permanently (that is, for a three-year period, and thereafter continuously) in New York.

and Councils, Inc. It was and is a symbol of a newer approach to the problems of community life. In it, agencies of social work, recreation, and welfare have found ways to unite for improved planning and co-operative financing. The Community Chest movement, organized in 1913, has risen to significant participation in American life during recent years. Long ago many communities were anxious to discover how to apply the modern financial campaign technique (p. 125) to an annual budget drive covering the needs of all co-operating agencies in the same community. The Chest lacked authority to compel co-operation, and as a result participation was less than complete. Attention was centered at first upon the raising of funds; but soon the problems of budgeting and the determination of goals demanded some type of planning for the welfare of the community as a whole. Allocation of campaign results also required criteria representing the best social understanding and intelligence. Many communities experienced problems at this point, especially when campaigns fell short. Many agencies in the 250 chest cities determined to appeal separately, and still do, for community support, after a period of trial. The reverse was true of others. In general, the struggle is still going on to determine by what means a community may best work out a democratic policy for its social and welfare services, especially among youth. There is wide agreement that each community should carry this responsibility for itself; and that a real place exists for such co-operation between private agencies, as well as between them and public efforts.

Councils of Social Agencies, co-ordinating councils and other groups now seek greater unity of service, better coverage in planning, and less competitive financing. Long since has the time passed when any one agency may ignore the existence of other socially-minded organizations that also seek to extend their service programs among youths. There is, and may well be, a certain healthy competition between such agencies as to the quality or value of whatever particular message or method they may represent. In the long run, the public must choose. Recent efforts to agree upon basic standards and comparable records seem hopeful and well-nigh mandatory upon any particular agency anxious to merit and retain community support.

Relations between public and private agencies became a subject of interested consideration during the nineteen twenties, and have since become a matter of major concern. The control of the education of its youth, at the secondary level, was achieved by democratic government only after many long years of struggle. It has not as yet become wholly clear how far, under present conditions, the services of the public agency are also needed, especially at the local level, to achieve co-ordination of what is already being done by private effort, as well as to supplement urgently needed welfare and recreational services among the underprivileged, especially youth.

Private-agency efforts, particularly by the Church and its agencies,

have become in the course of time highly institutionalized. They have usually selected some preferred segment or class of the community for service. They have built up constituencies of members and supporters interested in their "work." They have usually continued to hold central certain purposes and assumptions that could hardly win support from all of the people. These well-meaning and usually socially-useful services continued, in the nineteen twenties, to flourish independently. Yet important sectors of many communities were overlooked. Sociological studies revealed high incidence of crime among the youth of such areas (31).

These and related conditions have led to certain new alignments among public and private agencies (35) that have implications far beyond the problems of relief, with which they were at first frequently considered. Problems of support are always fundamental. But the free policy-making function of the private agency rests always upon its ability to secure from its services or its friends the funds for what it desires to do. The increasing size of even the minimum social programs called for and their extension to new areas seem to indicate that private means alone cannot begin to sustain or plan adequately for what must be done. Nor can the long-established sources of private support be longer taken for granted. Following the depression of 1929, not only do many great fortunes no longer exist but the increased taxation on larger income brackets in later years appears to be leading to decline in both amounts given and number of givers among the people of means. There are those who hail this as a generally favorable sign, since it may tend to lessen the assumed tendency to control by the economically strong and restore it to the rank and file of agency members.

American opinion seems to continue to look to the devoted, if increasingly institutionalized, efforts of the private voluntary association for some of its most significant services. Latterly, also, governmental undertakings generally seek appointment of advisory groups to help maintain effective current co-operation with private agencies. (Examples are the Parent-Teachers Association, advisory committees with most governmental projects, etc.) The field of the private agency seems to be most clearly defined in its pioneering and standard-setting function, in advance of readiness or ability of public agencies to assume responsibility. Certain highly specialized concerns, such as those resting on religious affiliation, appear to be somewhat permanently identified with private initiative. Under certain conditions, such as the recent depressions, close collaboration between both types of agency is needed to provide even minimum safeguards against social disaster. Whatever the exact form of relationship may be in the future, the private agency should probably be prepared to abandon a purely independent policy and to anticipate adjustment to the advantages and concessions of a co-operative policy.

*The Youth emphasis* of recent years bears particularly upon the

outlook and purposes of the Young Men's Christian Association. By this term is meant the whole range of needs, recognitions, and policies that have led public and private alike to multiply their services and enlarge their interest.

The creation, in 1912, of the Children's Bureau of the U. S. Department of Labor, it will be recalled, arose from the deep sense of injustice to children being wrought by the very elaboration of modern civilization. The forces that have until this day successfully prevented the establishment of effective child labor laws have also delayed the measures an enlightened democracy should have taken for equalizing educational and economic opportunity, and ensuring sound health. Notable efforts under President Hoover through the White House Conference on Child Care and Protection found a ready response among the people. So it was with the many measures affecting public education, both state and federal, by which educational opportunity was increased, and more highly differentiated, as well as identified more closely with the problems of self-maintenance and living. The increase of crime, especially among youth, has accented the demand for better and more united planning between educational, social, religious, and other agencies. Government itself cannot remain indifferent to the handicaps to the civic and moral growth of its future citizens. There is little demand in America for the regimented youth programs of fascist and communist countries. Totalitarian policies undoubtedly serve the objectives of these regimented states. In America, however, the philosophy of training for democratic citizenship must itself be democratic.

For many years Y.M.C.A.'s and other "youth membership organizations" (65) have been seeking to prepare for citizenship by guiding the youth in their activity groups and clubs toward experiences that call out group decisions fair to each participant. Such self-governing groups may have considerable "transfer" value in terms of participation in community and citizenship activities. The principles enunciated by John Dewey more than thirty years ago have now been widely disseminated; and if occasional discussions around educational policy appear to attack certain of their apparent implications, American education has now moved far from its earlier acceptance of the procedures and subject matters of earlier formal education.

Notable evidence of fresh appreciation of the urgency of the situation confronting American youth is the recent edition of *The Annals*. Here "the prospect for youth" is given a major authoritative review, "designed to focus attention upon the problems of youth to facilitate intelligent consideration of these problems." This review includes many valuable papers, one of the most suggestive of which describes "Youth Movements in the United States" (69), and demonstrates that leaders among America's youth will not sit waiting for solutions of their own problems or of those of the larger society about them.

The present educational system, which is this democracy's earliest

and principal project for the guidance of youth, and the Civilian Conservation Corps and the National Youth Administration, which are the latest, together with a large number of established and more or less flexible private organizations, face today the problem of modern youth not asking, as did George Albert Coe nearly fifteen years ago, "What ails our youth?" but "Whither America?"

In concluding this discussion of the place of the voluntary association in American culture, admission is freely made that the treatment very largely neglects the wider activity of voluntary associations in such fields as economics, politics, scientific effort, and social living generally. This has been done in order to emphasize the special application of the voluntary principle in the field of human relations and welfare, especially of youth. In so stressing the potency of this kind of association, it is clear that the genius of the voluntary association makes peculiar demands of a society like the Young Men's Christian Association. In substantially conforming, perhaps unavoidably, to one of the most natural and universal of social patterns, the Association Movement has been powerless to avoid either the logical rigidity of institutional manifestation or the perennial necessity of innovation.

There is an inevitable and never-ceasing tension, in the affairs of a great multiple association, between establishment and adjustment. Adjustment creates tension among the thousands of local member groups and in the larger relationships that comprise them. Moreover, many forms of behavior not indigenous to such groups and relationships are copied in part or transplanted bodily from economic, educational, religious or other areas. All of these elements bring about a tentative, dynamic equilibrium the nature and methods of control of which form the principal problem of the remaining chapters.

TABLE XXXIII

INSTITUTIONAL PATTERNS IN THE  
YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

(References are to pages)

PATTERNS	REFERENCES TO DEVELOPMENT					DEFINITION	REFERENCES TO ADAPTATION
	II	III	Chapters	IV	V		
A. Selection of Constituency.....	16, 31	53	118	151	232	311, 314, 317, 324, 328, 332	
B. Formulation of Aims.....	12, 19	86	143	157	235	311, 314, 317, 319, 321, 324, 332	
C. Formalization of Program.....	17, 19	73, 85	121	154	237	311, 332	
D. Organization of Associations.....	12, 25	46	128, 133	...	245	311, 324, 332	
E. National Structure and Control....	31, 34, 36, 38	107	133	145	249	311, 321	
F. Standard Buildings.....	23	73, 93	123	168	252	328	
G. Methods of Financing.....	....	56, 93, 107	125	171	255	319, 328, 332	
H. Articulation of Lay and Professional Leadership.....	27	101	130	180, 185	258	319, 335	
I. Relations with Community.....	27	...	142	174	262	314, 321, 324, 328	
J. Protestant Church Identification...	15, 20, 31	52	123, 137	158	265	317, 328	
K. Definition of Social Policy.....	21, 40, 42	56, 83	121, 139	...	267	324, 328, 332	

## CHAPTER VII

# SOME MAJOR INSTITUTIONAL PATTERNS IN Y.M.C.A. HISTORY

THE PANORAMIC treatment of Y.M.C.A. development in the preceding chapters, although less complete than desirable from a purely historical standpoint, nevertheless may supply sufficient detail and perspective to permit identifying at least some of the major institutional patterns that have been active during a considerable part if not the whole of the eighty-eight-year span.

The identification of such institutional patterns, although to some degree a recapitulation, provides an essential basis for examination at somewhat closer range of the adaptive process within these institutional forms. It will also suggest some of the principal areas within which the possibility of desirable redirection of organization energies and resources may later be fruitfully examined.

It was stated in Chapter I that the present study conceives of institutions as "the established forms or conditions of procedure characteristic of great activity," and that "every association has, in respect of its particular interest, its characteristic institutions." The present task is chiefly to review the *recurrent* and *characteristic* forms of behavior of the Y.M.C.A., with particular alertness for these "forms or conditions of procedure." It is not implied that such established forms were either unchanging in themselves or that their influence extended throughout the entire period down to the present. On the contrary, it was probable that the established and characteristic form or procedure was at all times a composite of certain relatively fixed and other modifying elements. The weight and potency of the institutional pattern must have been determined by the composition and vigor of both these factors. To the analysis of the *process* of adaptation of these institutional forms, a subsequent chapter will be devoted. In the present chapter, the chief aim will be made to ascertain the principal elements in such of these patterns as seem to have been especially influential in shaping and preserving the particular organizational identity known as the Young Men's Christian Association.

The patterns to be discussed were far from mutually exclusive. They were, in fact, interdependent. They gained significance in their

composite relationship to the total life of a complex association. Each played its part, whether simultaneously or serially, as an aspect of a larger whole. Priority among them was the result of specific circumstances. In all, eleven aspects have been identified for further discussion, as follows:

- A. Selection of Constituency
- B. Formulation of Aims
- C. Formalization of Program
- D. Organization of Associations
- E. National Structure and Control
- F. Standard Buildings
- G. Methods of Financing
- H. Articulation of Lay and Professional Leadership
- I. Relations with Community
- J. Protestant Church Identification
- K. Definition of Social Policy

Table XXXIII indicates by page number the full exposition of these patterns in the present chapter, and offers citations in preceding and following chapters for the convenience of the reader who may wish to trace the development of such patterns.

#### A. SELECTION OF CONSTITUENCY

The institutional pattern relating to selection of constituency may be defined as follows:

##### *A Constituency*

- predominantly male, moving toward inclusion of both sexes;
- predominantly youthful, moving toward the inclusion of all ages;
- essentially non-resident (at first) but very early rooted in permanently attached resident and occupational groups;
- predominantly connected with business and clerical pursuits despite organization claims of a mission to "all classes"; reflecting chiefly the more personal traits of character and success as distinguished from group self-interest, and tending to eventuate in a highly individualistic philosophy of organization and relationships;
- selected on the basis of interest for fellowship around purposes and activities that became increasingly diversified;
- legally defined and controlled for much of its history in the interest of typically Protestant church objectives, yet moving toward broader technical eligibility centered in part on exacting formulations of individual Christian belief and, in contrast, in official policies by which affiliation became locally self-determined.

##### *Comment*

The original and typical member of the Y.M.C.A. was the young

man. The conception of a "work exclusively for young men" was widely established by 1880, and may be thought of as essentially an institution in itself. It was a preferred usage that gained prevalence until it was proclaimed as correct in policy and was for more than forty years a basic criterion of regular or standard Association qualification. It was natural, however, that many young men wished to retain their connection with the Association as they became older. Many did so throughout their lives. Boys also were in time widely accepted into program activities, and before 1900 came into actual membership. In 1936, boys constituted 40.1 per cent of all members; men over twenty-five, 26.9 per cent; women and girls, 10.2 per cent; while young men eighteen to twenty-four were only 22.8 per cent.

In the early decades, many Associations believed that both young women as well as young men should be received into actual membership, and so included them. However, the practice did not win general acceptance and was almost entirely discontinued until relatively recent years, when women and girls once again came to have a substantial part in the programs of many local Associations.

Thus the process of modifying the institutional pattern of a membership "exclusively for young men" consisted primarily of a natural extension of age at both ends and a rather recent and fairly wide acceptance of the other sex into membership and program relationships.

In the earlier decades, the local member was most often the young man away from his home community in a larger city, and there seeking clean accommodations and supporting friendships while making his way in the new industrial society. The transient or non-resident young member, with relatively narrow age range, gradually became established as a permanent resident while the age range was extended. The nature and policy of the interest of such persons must have varied with individuals as with time and place. It was sufficiently definitive, however, to bring together potentially like-minded persons unacquainted with one another, and to compose them into an associated relationship, serial in character, capable of indefinite continuance without relation to any particular participant.

As the number of Associations increased, and news of these novel organizations and facilities spread along the railways, into the colleges and presently into the military services, the claim of the universality of the Association fellowship was itself institutionalized. For many decades, a principal theme in Association assemblies dealt with the need for extending the work "among all classes of young men"; and each Convention heard with great satisfaction of the progress made. It was soon evident that this over-arching view was not wholly true to the facts; for within the American cities, as within industry, it was becoming clear that the Associations were not proving a wholly accepted vehicle for the interest of the typical industrial worker, notwithstanding Associa-

tion service among thousands of them in the co-operating industries. Clerical and business workers predominated, as they still do. Yet in more recent years, the acceptance of group membership from every part of the local population, and the growing identity of the worker interest between industrial and other groups, may conceivably create a broader basis for the common interest, and in time substantially modify what many consider to be the essentially middle-class character of the Association Movement.

In terms of legal qualifications, the typical early member could become a fully recognized affiliate of many local Associations if only he were of good character. Nothing more was required. In 1868, more than half of the reporting Associations allowed such young men to be classified as "active" and to hold office, though they were without formal church relationship. Other Associations vigorously fought this practice. In 1869, the International Convention established evangelical church membership as a condition of local "active" membership, including the right to vote and to hold office; and premised recognition of local Associations upon conformity to this ruling. This was a definite institutional action. It set a framework of recognition and control that remained unbroken for nearly forty years.

Modification came ultimately: (1) by International Convention action in 1907, establishing an alternate "personal basis" for use among student Associations; (2) by Convention action fifteen years later in 1922, permitting up to 10 per cent of local boards to be drawn from other than evangelical churches or from no church on acceptance of a somewhat stringent personal statement (which was, however, later largely disregarded); (3) by the Convention in 1925, extending the personal basis authorized among student Associations to be used (after some revision) among all Associations; and (4) by the National Council in 1933, recognizing the right of any local Association to determine *for itself* all rules of membership,<sup>1</sup> granted only that such Associations certify that such members "be in accord with the purposes, ideals, and spirit of the Young Men's Christian Association."

As these successive modifications of a once strongly institutionalized control of membership practice were made, the official committees representing the International Convention began to relax a once vigilant supervision of local membership practices, ceased investigation altogether, and contented themselves with a form of local certification, which remains today as the principal legal means of membership control so far as national membership qualification is concerned. Practically complete autonomy now replaces what was once a central aspect of the philosophy and integration of the Association Movement.

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<sup>1</sup> This action opened the way for any Association to include women and girls as members.

### B. FORMULATION OF AIMS

The institutional pattern relating to the formulation of aims may be defined as follows:

#### *A Formulation of Aims*

- conceived in terms of individual Christian belief, broadening more recently to include the implications of competent and fruitful living as an effective Christian person responsible, among other things, for helping to build a Christian society;
- defined chiefly in terms of earlier Protestant Church theological ideology and applied as legal controls upon policy-authorization, yet modifying slowly (many would say belatedly) toward liberty of individual belief and Association fellowship centered more largely in activity interest or demand rather than in any affirmation or reformation of religious philosophy. (The advent of inter-confessional or ecumenical interest and inter-religious fellowship among official groups, is a significant recent development);
- derived mainly from precedent, and only incidentally from authentic reference to member groups, yet reflecting the "demand" of their interests and seeking means of making their more fundamental interests and needs operative in determining directions.

#### *Comment*

The objectives of early Associations were implicit in the conditions that brought them into being. Composed of Christian young men, firm in their Protestant conviction, though skeptical about the typical denominational cleavages, they readily espoused the accepted formulations of that faith as the avowed objects of their now united effort. Everywhere about these young men were evidences of the deterioration that accompanied indifference to or lapse from Christian loyalty. They found it easy to subscribe to the only effective alternative they knew that would prevent such human disaster, as they firmly believed. This conviction became the basis of one of the most persistent institutional patterns in Association history.

At no time, however, was it the practice to bring up from the actual members themselves what was actually believed or held by them significant for corporate effort. Instead, representatives in authoritative positions, both lay and professional, usually stressed reaffirmation of older formulations rather than fresh formulations based upon current conviction. The Associations seemed for many decades reluctant to attempt formulations of their own that might lay them open to the charge of setting up their own definition of Christian faith or of attempting to start a new denomination.

As even a superficial examination of the activities of early Associations will show (p. 16) the means employed were as diversified as the

stated ends were definite. Numerous Conventions prior to 1869 had attempted so to define objectives as to result in the individual Christian discipleship that they were convinced would follow the "acceptance of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord." But these actions and convictions were less definitely institutionalized than were those more theological statements of belief formulated in relation to the definition of the "evangelical" church at the Portland Convention in 1869 (p. 49). This definition soon became the symbol of Association orthodoxy, and still remains so for a substantial part of the Association Movement.

However, as the collective Association life included larger and larger numbers of those not so firmly convinced regarding these matters and in no real sense committed to any particular set of formulated articles of belief, it became more difficult to assert any common conviction, or to secure a consensus around which to rally. Representative assemblies assumed the task of restating, from time to time, the things then held in common. These gatherings were always under some considerable anxiety to preserve the form and substance of preceding formulations, or to advance new formulations. These efforts were not often unopposed, and were rarely if ever victorious. The records of the Conventions and Councils of the national organization from 1854 down to the present reveal the stress of such conflicts.

In time, the Associations began to take their objectives for granted. In their place activity (that is, whatever met and satisfied expressed interests of members), became itself the real objective. It is possible that the practical abandonment of realistic connection between official formulations and member attitudes had thus prepared the Associations for acceptance of the modern educational methodology based upon interest in activity long before it was formally recognized or understood.

The most recent official formulation of Association purpose is as follows:

The Young Men's Christian Association we regard as being, in its essential genius, a world-wide fellowship of men and boys united by a common loyalty to Jesus Christ for the purpose of building Christian personality and a Christian society. (Adopted in 1931.)

The statement represents a marked modification of view about social policy and religious aim from the long-accepted purely individual emphasis. This substantial modification of a highly institutionalized point of view was in process of emergence over a period of more than ten years. During these years, world upheaval and accelerated social change must have brought home to Association leaders the relative impotence of efforts toward personal character that remained unconcerned about social conditions thwarting its realization. Nor have the implications of the greatly enriched studies of recent years as to the nature of human personality and the learning process been overlooked.

### C. FORMALIZATION OF PROGRAM

The institutional pattern relating to the formalization of program may be defined as follows:

#### *A Formalization of Program*

- based upon voluntary personal response;
- reflecting the stereotype of a fourfold philosophy of personality;
- modifying under psychological and sociological insights toward wider diversity of offerings and activity programs based upon individual interest;
- resulting in unprecedented volume and variety of sponsored group enterprises assumed to have significant values for achievement of Christian standards of character and so viewed as ends in themselves;
- leading to the suggestion of a new rapprochement with those whose organization philosophy seems to be based primarily upon *methodology* of work with groups without reference to religious objectives as such;
- lacking as yet an effective integration for either individual or organization; and, in consequence, without decisive impact upon social need.

#### *Comment*

Group activity early became prominent in the life of all local Associations. At first there may have been only one group, the Association itself. As its scope increased, its program became more varied, its actual membership more diversified in interest, a variety of groupings came into being.

Institutional tendency entered when, before such diversity, effort was made to satisfy the interests by means of *existing* program offerings or too wide groupings of such members for pursuit of an innovated program. The "standard" or fourfold program emerged very early in the history of the Association. (See p. 12.) It long held sway among the Associations. It became the principal thing—an end in itself. The crude and varied interests of young men themselves were only signals of need to be met by standard remedies or stereotyped programs. Individual personality was symbolized first by the triangle, later by the square. Programs were elaborated upon its physical, intellectual, social, and religious aspects and the assumed independence of each.

Modification of these formal stereotypes was long delayed. Recognition of the desirability of variation became more general from 1925 to 1930. Modification of the basis of member activity to make wise use of interest was at once a demanding and delicate variation. The insights of progressive education were increasingly needed to safeguard the personality and uniqueness of the individual member; and to pro-

TABLE XXXIV  
KINDS AND FREQUENCY OF INTERESTS REVEALED BY  
RECORDED INTERVIEWS WITH NEW MEMBERS

1. No evident interest in life.....	7	31. Recreation and social experience..	4	66. First aid.....	1
2. Basketball ( <i>per se</i> )	39	32. Wrestling.....	5	67. Personal development (character).....	1
3. Vocation (present position).....	19	33. Residence, place to live.....	18	68. Wish for approval	13
4. Public speaking...	7	34. Tennis.....	3	69. To be successful..	9
5. Swimming.....	47	35. Journalism.....	3	70. Aviation pilot....	5
6. Welfare of family.	1	36. Mechanical drawing.....	1	71. Establish a home.	2
7. Reducing weight..	9	37. Financial success.	3	72. Time study engineer.....	1
8. Boxing.....	8	38. To be a musician.	4	73. Withdrawing — living to himself.....	4
9. Vocational analysis and guidance.....	15	39. Interior decorator and designer...	1	74. Professional baseball.....	2
10. Baseball.....	8	40. Health.....	15	75. Reading books....	6
11. Physical development.....	6	41. Social friendship and companionship.....	15	76. Travel (new experience).....	2
12. Western stories and adventure..	2	42. Salesman.....	1	77. Railroading.....	2
13. Bookkeeping and accountancy...	1	43. Billiards.....	2	78. Independence — self-expression	1
14. Fencing.....	5	44. To play in an orchestra.....	1	79. Reading and writing alone on some high mountain.....	1
15. Handball.....	16	45. Life saving.....	3	80. Business.....	3
16. Teaching.....	2	46. Gymnastics.....	4	81. Golf.....	1
17. Recognition (through skills). 9		47. Sex education....	3	82. Snakes.....	1
18. Complete education.....	15	48. Marital adjustment.....	3	83. Comfortable living.....	1
19. Mechanical engineering.....	2	49. Camping.....	1	84. Dominating — directing people..	3
20. Physical exercise..	49	50. Leadership.....	8	85. Detailed work....	1
21. Church work....	1	51. Volley ball.....	3	86. Sex satisfaction...	1
22. Broker or bondsman.....	1	52. Learning to speak better English..	3	87. Song writing (jazz and popular songs) .....	1
23. Automobile mechanic.....	1	53. Getting married..	2	88. Some form of social service work.....	1
24. Commercial art...	3	54. Rife club.....	7	89. Go back to Ireland	1
25. To become an athlete.....	13	55. Corrective gymnastics.....	2	90. Mechanical trades	1
26. To own a chicken farm.....	1	56. Education of his children.....	1	91. Advertising.....	1
27. Stationary engineering.....	1	57. Law.....	4	92. Become a big chemist.....	1
28. Vocational placement.....	18	58. Medicine (Doctor)	1	93. Track.....	1
29. Direct an orchestra.....	1	59. Checkers.....	1	94. Dramatic actor...	1
30. Getting acquainted with U. S. social and industrial life...	4	60. Becoming a life guard.....	1	95. Agriculture.....	1
		61. Glee club.....	6	96. Forestry.....	1
		62. Wish for security.	16	Total.....	545
		63. Wish for superiority.....	17		
		64. To become a physical director or coach.....	3		
		65. Business contacts.	1		

vide criteria for judging the efficacy of programs long accepted. This problem merits further analysis.

In the course of a recent investigation, the "interests" of newly admitted local members were studied in a leading city branch (136). Kinds and frequency of interests uppermost in the minds of these new members were recorded by suitable devices in the course of a carefully organized interview plan. Table XXXIV shows something of the great diversity of what seemed to be the dominant interests that appeared to characterize these young men as individuals at the time of interview. Some of them were "fundamental and basic," some "merely instrumental," but all represented "wishes which these men sought to satisfy in greater or lesser measure in the Young Men's Christian Association."

Under the older standardized program it was customary to attempt to meet this highly diversified field of individual interests largely by formal gymnasium, educational, or Bible classes, by a variety of religious meetings, by evangelistic interviews, by informal social occasions, and by the provision of building centers for assembly, recreation, and fellowship. Under the more flexible recent program, Associations have tended to assume their obligation and responsibility to provide adequately for the whole gamut of varied interests. They have often ignored the possibility that most communities provided various resources other than the Y.M.C.A. for supplying these interests. They have sometimes also failed to keep the responsibility for utilizing these resources squarely upon the individual involved.

Table XXXV reveals the large number and variety of such group units that resulted in four typical Associations in a single year in the attempt to meet such interests. These were all reported as activities under Association auspices in which two or more persons were enrolled over a period of time, and in which they consciously acted together for the purpose of advancing a mutual interest. These Associations ranged in population from 26,400 to nearly 300,000. They reported 194, 330, 334, and 674 activity groups, respectively. For the country as a whole, for 1936, a grand total of 100,000 groups was reported. Not all of these groups were in existence at the same time. Many were considered permanent as groupings, though their personnel changed from year to year.

Not all of these numerous groupings were composed of those locally considered as members of the Y.M.C.A. In recent years, many Associations have come to encourage the formation of groups without requiring enrolment as members or payment of any given fee. Some Associations have made a practice of counting all such group members as members. In 1936, it was reported that 71.1 per cent or 678,575 members in 529 Associations were also members of groups. Institutional patterns in the local program apply equally to groups of non-members sponsored by the local Associations. Such groups may come to the Association with some group history and an established identity. They may come

TABLE XXXV  
LOCAL GROUPS SPONSORED BY ASSOCIATIONS IN CERTAIN CITIES  
(Reported to the Y.M.C.A. Year Book for 1936)

ASSOCIATION A—26,400 POPULATION		ASSOCIATION B—52,200 POPULATION	
	Enrolled		Enrolled
25 committees .....	250	98 committees .....	725
3 councils .....	50	3 councils .....	97
2 leaders' corps (physical.)....	55	1 leaders' corps .....	17
2 Junior Hi-Y clubs.....	64	4 Junior Hi-Y clubs.....	68
1 Senior Hi-Y club.....	44	9 Senior Hi-Y clubs.....	198
9 Neighborhood groups.....	128	25 boys' neighborhood clubs.....	420
2 Special-interest groups .....	48	1 foremen's club .....	290
1 Phalanx Fraternity .....	24	1 Acorn club.....	22
1 Y's Men's Club.....	56	1 Indus club.....	20
1 Y's Menettes (wives).....	25	1 Y-Esco club.....	35
1 Altonia club.....	10	1 Y-Discussion club.....	12
1 Young Men's luncheon club..	4	1 Recreation leaders Institute...	98
2 Training Groups.....	40	3 musical groups.....	107
2 formal education classes.....	65	10 arts and craft classes.....	176
3 informal education classes....	27	8 informal education classes....	157
48 physical education classes....	910	1 forum .....	250
72 physical dept. teams, etc.....	1,920	12 formal education classes.....	292
17 neighborhood gang soft-ball groups.....	500	14 physical education classes.....	542
Different groups reported.....	192	42 physical dept. teams, etc.....	340
Enrolments .....	4,223	15 bowling league groupings.....	885
		30 swimming classes.....	725
		36 soft-ball teams.....	450
		16 touch-tackle teams.....	160
		Groups .....	328
		Enrolments .....	6,086
ASSOCIATION C—POPULATION 108,100		ASSOCIATION D—POPULATION 290,700	
	Enrolled		Enrolled
69 committees .....	445	63 committees .....	826
3 councils .....	36	2 councils .....	55
11 Gra-Y clubs.....	385	1 leaders' corps.....	58
9 Junior Hi-Y clubs.....	203	1 volunteer office service.....	116
6 Senior Hi-Y clubs.....	160	1 junior leaders.....	34
12 craft and hobby clubs.....	180	11 Senior Hi-Y Clubs .....	273
7 boys' camp groups.....	766	2 church groups.....	29
1 high-school lobby group.....	225	1 neighborhood club.....	72
1 Phalanx Fraternity.....	19	1 handicraft club.....	400
1 Y's Men's club.....	32	1 engineering club .....	20
10 Young Men's clubs.....	63	1 airplane club.....	4
1 industrial club.....	225	1 Y's Men's club.....	76
2 musical groups.....	25	25 industrial tennis league groups.	172
1 churchmen's lunch club.....	160	5 industrial groups .....	174
1 high-school team.....	50	12 social skills groups.....	775
46 leisure time Institute groups...	685	2 membership campaign groups...	90
7 Industrial Club Night Schools..	207	2 musical and dramatic.....	35
22 physical education classes.....	1,766	50 formal education classes.....	552
71 physical dept. teams, etc.....	862	57 physical education classes.....	3,748
47 swimming groups .....	2,633	156 physical dept. teams.....	1,960
1 boys' dance class.....	50	261 other physical groups.....	4,664
1 vocational group.....	48	13 beginners and advanced swim- ming .....	1,080
1 gospel team.....	9	1 mother's club.....	60
Groups .....	381	Groups .....	672
Enrolments .....	9,284	Enrolments .....	15,401

as individuals, and find some common interest or activity that emerges into group status. Or they may continue to use facilities individually. Nearly 30 per cent of the members of the mentioned above 529 Associations used the various services in this way.

It is evident that some of these program groupings, such as councils or committees, are directing, planning, and managing groups; some are broader natural groupings, such as the school clubs, industrial workers, neighborhood groupings; some are based on special interests, such as musical and dramatic groups; some are formal classes for specific educational or the physical experience; some are essentially social. Whatever the basic interest or purpose or method, each of these makes its contribution to a highly varied program and in each of them the institutional tendency to rely upon established modes of procedure is undoubtedly actively at work.

Because the place of group program activity has been so significant and characteristic a feature of Association development, it appears necessary to examine in even greater detail certain aspects of the institutional tendency within the group pattern.

*In terms of maintaining group identity:* The selection of a group name often represented the first step toward giving the group standing and recognition. Names chosen by local groups, especially those composed of younger persons, are sometimes astonishing, and frequently not descriptive of activities planned. Further recognitions gained through various group undertakings have helped to establish group ties and expectation both among the members and others. Competition has played a significant rôle in many groups, particularly athletic groups.

By whatever means, the mere fact of continuance itself has usually helped to reinforce the group identity and pattern. If such a group continued over a considerable period of time, its members necessarily grew older, its personnel probably shifted somewhat, and its interests changed. If the group was of the club type, it probably remained intact as a personal and social bond over a long period of time, surviving many adjustments in environment, including its inability to have frequent face-to-face contact. For example, one such typical group continued eleven years, from their first contact with the Y.M.C.A. as boy members through high school and (for all but one) college, and on into various occupations. Originally eight, they became twelve, and later sixteen in number. They were from industrial homes; seven were members of the Roman Catholic Church, nine were Protestants. Nine became leaders of other clubs, while retaining their close friendship through the original club. Eleven were camp officers. They were said to have been exceptional as to character. They had an "all-around" or "four-fold" program described as "flexible, changing, growing"; and practised self-government. Said the reporter: "Here is a Y.M.C.A. club held together for eleven years by the bonds of friendship. They elected their

own officers and planned their own activities. They were not a single interest group. They explored the great areas of life together. A Christian leader took into this group the spirit of Christ, and this spirit leavened the whole lump" (135, p. 27).

However, many groups that experience substantial changes in personnel, continue to exhibit real group identity. For example, a Senior Hi-Y club composed of boys in the two upper years of high school had to lose almost half its members each year. Yet the club itself continued vigorously, year after year. The leader himself continued, but ultimately he also yielded to another.

In these instances, then, may be seen the fact that group identity and continuity were based upon certain relatively constant patterns in the midst of generally changing elements such as age, interest, and social environment. In each instance, the modification represented interaction between persons, group, and surrounding elements in which each aspect was modified in some degree; but in which each also exhibited ability to span the more limited period of time with some embracing capacity for adaptation of *experience-to-date* in terms of *experience present* and *experience-to-come*.

*In terms of affiliation or organization status:* Such groups as became known or sponsored in any Y.M.C.A. relation were only a small number of the actual groupings in effect among the same constituency at any given time. If they so became known, they did so by reason of some peculiar mark of name, place of assembly, type of program interest, etc. It could not be assumed that such groupings as were found in Associations were in all respects better than or unique from groupings not so related, nor that their program or assumed benefits were in all cases distinctive. In general, Association groupings so identified maintained a loose rather than close relationship. They were, in the main, without formal organization status in relation to the Association itself, or with other similar groupings related to it.

Groups considering themselves a part of a composite local Y.M.C.A. expression were always ready to indicate their relationship. This was identification from within. Often other groupings with some clearly established outside status, such as a high school or industrial club, were equally certain of their standing as Y.M.C.A. units. Some of these represented joint sponsorship as between the Association and the other auspices. Many a boy-gang group also with history and identity of its own, entirely outside Y.M.C.A. connection or influence, has little by little accepted a tentative relationship to the Association which, once begun, became a matter of pride. In these instances, groups have maintained a loose but effective relationship to Associations, largely though not wholly on the basis of their own inner attitudes.

To greater extent in recent years, however, Associations have tended to institute more formal processes of affiliation. Actual registration has become a formal procedure in some larger Associations. The leader-

ship, program field, place and time of meetings, etc., have become definite conditions of acceptance and sponsorship. As Associations have come to appreciate the responsibility of supervision, provision and training of leaders, etc., the element of costs has been considered. The Associations have regarded such formal registration also as a protection before the community, allowing them to sponsor only those groups whose purposes and activities could be approved and supported. Periodic reports or sponsored activities when used for community interpretation are an example of institutional emphasis.

*In terms of developing structure and leadership patterns:* A typical feature of Association experience was the adoption of some sort of rules, perhaps a constitution, and officers. The first Association groups were usually of this type. Patterns of religious and school experience were sometimes followed, with instructional methods prevailing, and self-organization delayed or absent altogether. Pressure sometimes came from within for some measure of self-government. Clubs were a relatively recent development, however, representing a modification from the formality and rigidity of a managed status toward a freer type of association. Such a development did not mean absence of leader or leadership, but a change in their function. According to a recent classification of enrolled groups (141) approved for use among Y.M.C.A.'s and other similar agencies, the following structure and leader-relation patterns have emerged as significant:

*Clubs:* groups of persons bound together by personal and social ties, the membership of each group being determined by that group. Control is within the group through duly elected or appointed officers.

*Classes:* groups of two or more persons meeting on a regular schedule for the acquisition of specific knowledge, the exercise of individual skills, or participation in a specific educational activity. Control is vested in a teacher or leader.

*Teams:* groups organized for participation in contests or for demonstration purposes in activities involving physical prowess or skill, and which meet at regularly scheduled intervals for special training or practice.

*Special-interest groups:* groups in which the interest centers in the activity and not in personal association. (Such groups are not classified as club, class or team.)

*Inter-group committees and councils:* committees or councils made up of representatives of two or more groups or from the general membership of the Association.

*In terms of program philosophy and method:* The acceptance of the "fourfold" emphasis in Association programs through the last two decades of the nineteenth century led to the dominance of this conception of personality throughout a rigidly departmentalized organization

(p. 73ff.). Previous chapters have referred to the changing impact of scientific thought upon religious activity both in American Protestantism and in the Associations. The very advent of what may be called the progressive education point of view had to await the statement of principles of psychology in educational and religious terms by leaders such as William James, John Dewey, George A. Coe, and others. The twentieth century was well advanced before the bearing of these principles made their direct impact upon the Young Men's Christian Association. The development of discussion process came into wide usage following 1918, through the activity of Harrison S. Elliott and others. The problem of understanding the behavior of growing boys made boys' work secretaries ready for the new insights of educational psychology revealing how learning takes place, the nature of habit, the problems of transfer of training, etc. The Estes Park Assembly of North American Workers with Boys in 1925 has been cited as a highly instrumental occasion, for there Professor Kilpatrick enunciated these basic principles before the group as a whole and introduced them to the fascinating study of character education. The implications of the educational method of program activity for club and group work and for organization and leadership as well have largely occupied the mind of Association leaders since that time.

From these beginnings has followed a substantial release from the rigidity of much of the class type of group activity, even in gymnastic classes, in favor of freer recreative and play groups. Hobby and special-interest groupings have come into recognition. The conception of "natural groupings" was recognized as contrasted with composed or "fabricated" groupings made up of individuals associated mechanically without other personal or continuous ties into various program units. The more recent "neighborhood group" typically represents a boys' club grouping in the adjacent residential setting. It has gained ground as a challenge to types of groupings that were confined to central buildings, or that required special equipment for their activity. Groups of school youth have been organized around school life and experience, with or without official school sponsorship. They represented a natural variant of the principle of indigenous activity, as against constructed activity in other than an indigenous setting. Similarly, groupings of employed boys were made up from working relations in a typical work setting. They carried the same principle further. Foremen's clubs were a still further development, representing many different industrial organizations in the community, yet arising within a distinctive pattern of work functions. All of these examples illustrate a significant modification of the original basis of group composition and scope. They suggest that social process in organized groups (50) presents both a substantial institutional tendency, and a method of adaptation to changing elements in constituency and environment as a condition of survival.

Protests there have been in large number, from those who were unable to reconcile the approach through interest and activity with their own conviction about the value of direct testimony based upon the evangelistic approach. It has been somewhat widely felt that the newer "educational" method avoided seeking any definite religious commitment on the part of leaders, and that it exhibited substantial indifference to the urgency of aligning members and organizations on an avowed Christian discipleship basis. Religion, once so institutionalized in the life of the Association, could not see another approach become dominant without resisting it. Yet religion itself had long since found that avowal was not enough. Practical applications in daily life formed the essential test. Recent attempts to reinstate the once prominent methodology of evangelism in Association practice have never been very warmly approved. Many resist the suggestion that the Associations should have their main common ground with organizations that make no claim of religious affiliation. At the present time, both professional and lay groups appear to seek means of reasserting a once questioned centrality of religious concern. They likewise appear to be confused as to how to express this interest. The pattern of institutionalized religious faith appears to be shifting, with increasing reliance upon educational methodology. The final outcome does not yet seem clear.

#### D. ORGANIZATION OF ASSOCIATIONS

The institutional pattern relating to the organization of local associations may be defined as follows:

##### *Organization of Associations*

- as voluntary fellowships of young men based upon interest, yet tending with increased size, complexity, and age to lose their cohesion and identity of concern;
- as complex enterprises responsible to members and public for the acquisition and control of property, and in consequence tending to concentrate control in the older, more experienced, and conservative section of the membership;
- as agencies for administering voluntary social and religious education programs with vast numbers of youth without, as yet, devising adequate means for establishing the responsible partnership of youth in policy making, program direction, and control.

##### *Comment*

The formation of local voluntary fellowships was the characteristic mode of establishment of the Y.M.C.A. in American life. These early local units had original or independent existence, but subsequently made affiliation with the general federation a condition of recognition and status. In either case the nature of the local voluntary association

as such was the significant factor. The local Y.M.C.A. was thus a typical voluntary association, in a sociological sense, an association of persons based upon common interest rather than one composed of group units as such.

These local fellowships stressed self-organization, and committee work by laymen, as an expression of Christian obligations stressed by Protestant evangelical church thought. They devised and circulated "constitutions" and other written patterns of organization designed to extend and protect these principles.

The early Associations conducted their affairs through regular meetings of members. They soon found that the moderate business aspects of the organizations required a different type of control that could not easily be given in the open member meeting. Only rarely in later years were meetings of all members found feasible. The diversity of background and outlook of these members did not tend naturally to bring them into official deliberative meetings, notwithstanding an assumed common purpose. Such assemblies finally occurred only on such formal occasions as an Annual Meeting. Then some review of the work of the entire Association for the year was attempted, and representatives of group activities were visible if not vocal. To a degree, also, in the mobilization for annual finance campaigns, the same collective strength of the organization was in evidence.

Before the Civil War the "board of managers" appeared. As buildings increased in number and property increased, the boards of directors were established. They were usually more mature, more experienced, and often more influential or wealthy than the ordinary member. As rotation in office was (and still is) rare, the tendency toward the long tenure of elders responsible for control of finances and policy became one of the most common forms of institutional influence. Persons were likely to be chosen who had won a measure of community confidence, who were held in personal esteem, and who would lend prestige to the organization. Many of such board members were prominent in Protestant church affairs. Many, but not all of them, had had earlier contact with the Association as young men or boys. In specialized communities, however, such boards tended to include persons of status and authority within the special constituency served, such as the commandant of a military establishment, the dean of a college, the high railroad official, or the general manager or plant superintendent of an industry. In such instances, with whatever prestige may have been brought to the board relationship by reason of such prior connection, there was brought also a certain element of control external to the life of the Association but one impinging heavily upon it. The institutional status of such board members, like other aspects of social status of members in ordinary communities, served to over-lie and perhaps over-rule natural expression and free development of the Associations or related

groupings thus directed. The character of such influences has been studied in boards of education and, to some degree, of churches (75 and 76).

In 1922, a proposal was made and formally approved by the International Convention recognizing the right and propriety of including in a local board up to 10 per cent of its members from other than evangelical churches or from no church. This substantial modification of a long-standing institutional arrangement was followed in 1933 by an action of the National Council permitting to local Associations the right to determine all qualifications for both board members and members of the Association (p. 158). This modification was toward an inclusive liberalism. It followed trends in practice that had left behind at least the older traditional limitation, and perhaps also the concern for certain religious values assumed to be protected through placing policy determination in the hands of those understood to be loyal to strict evangelical principles.

The device of limiting voting for such officers or on matters of policy or expenditure to those designated as "active" members eliminated the larger part of the membership from such participation. Moreover, members rarely sought to exercise their voting function, and still show the same general apathy. As a result, both in operating control and in choosing leadership, the resulting method of policy formation became highly institutionalized. In general, the youth constituency continued to increase in numbers, but steadily lost in control. Modern Associations, though espousing the principle of self-government in their group activity, and developing a limited number of youth councils, have shown little ability or interest in reasserting the direct participation of youth in the formation of general policy. Sometimes, but still rarely, such councils have some recognized relationship in the board of directors. Ordinarily such boards include but few younger men (see age distribution of nearly ten thousand board members on p. 182). As a result, the typical member is largely lost sight of in the network of institutional safeguards and controls that have grown up with the years.

Though representative voices from youth constituencies are now commonly heard in general gatherings of Associations, and are often present as "exhibits" of the value of the local work, there is as yet no effective avenue of participation by self-governing youth groups in the corporate and national expressions of the Y.M.C.A. In general, in this relation, modification has usually been toward narrowing rather than broadening the responsibility for policy and property control. The condition has led to a recent tendency toward independent expression, on a national scale, of youth groupings in terms of their own interests and needs. The National Council of Student Associations was the first of these. The National Young Men's Assembly was the next, although along somewhat different lines. The impressive second National Con-

gress of Hi-Y Clubs represents yet another movement toward some form of group expression. It may be found finally to be true that the Y.M.C.A. so completely identified its control with the elders that it was unable to reinstate youth leadership in a movement still regarded as a "youth-membership organization."

Some Associations have undertaken complete reorganization to ensure that younger groups shall not attain control. The creation of membership corporations of a few hundreds of local laymen who have won recognition in committee or similar services must be regarded with skepticism. They are nominated usually by the board of directors itself, and to whom alone has been given authority to vote on policy and administrative proposals. However, by the general provisions of the Constitution adopted in 1923, as amended, such procedures have full recognition and sanction, and will presumably continue to have until some new emphasis upon democratic practices gains headway. This corporation plan reveals a typical business corporation pattern (p. 246) in which the rank and file have no significant relation to the election process. This is limited to a group of proven "stockholders," that is, of trusted and board-nominated "members," who would rarely wish, and could hardly ever manage, to change significantly the policies firmly fixed by the controlling board itself. The significance of this analysis is that it reveals a trend away from the democratic principle that seems to lie at the heart of a voluntary association. Whatever the typical annual meeting may have lacked as a convincing expression of democratic control, it had become an occasion for interpretation to the community and to the membership what had been accomplished with resources available. The measure of confidence that resulted was often more effective than a formal vote in supporting the further efforts of leaders and the policies for which they stood.

The practice of unlimited tenures of board service continued to be general. In recent years, however, some Associations began to use the principle of rotation. In such instances, those who were less efficient were not carried permanently. They were dropped automatically. Those who were of great value likewise yielded to new members, sometimes younger successors. They might be restored after an interval of a year, provided they seem to merit such return to responsibility. Junior boards were created by some Associations. Their responsibility was usually limited to some phase of group or program activity. Rarely, however, did the junior board have definite organic standing in the principal or adult board itself. It seems to represent a concession to youth without any real transfer of responsibility. In the field of program creation, however, such junior boards, like other member councils and committees, had considerable scope: though it tended further to divorce activity and control, and appeared to represent a doubtful modification of the organizational pattern.

### E. NATIONAL STRUCTURE AND CONTROL

The institutional pattern relating to creation of a serviceable national structure and its control may be defined as follows:

#### *A National Structure*

- becoming increasingly complex, costly, and unwieldy with the extension of organization in the field, the differentiation of emphasis and constituencies and elaboration of initial purposes; a structure requiring continual readjustment and simplification;
- respecting and relying upon a profound sense of local responsibility, yet seeking to develop and maintain common aims and a democratically determined strategy;
- struggling against extreme localism toward the solidarity essential for effective impact upon the cultural forces shaping the destiny of American youth.

#### *Comment*

The formation of the Confederation in 1854 took place barely three years after the first Associations were organized in this country. It symbolized the desire of these groups of young men for a fellowship that would transcend the local community. Before the marked interdependence of modern society, bound ever more into unity by means of the radio, rapid transportation, etc., these local groups were reaching out across the land and establishing a working relationship commensurate with the swiftly changing social, economic, and religious conditions that surrounded them.

During the first thirty years of its existence, many adjustments in this early relationship were made. The Confederation as a unifying bond was broken during the Civil War, but at least among northern Associations the war itself forged a mightier one. Following the war, the Associations of the North were eager to reconstitute in a different form the relationship of the International Convention. They also arranged such interim functioning as represented effective continuance of their inter-Association activities. This interim body, the International Committee, was incorporated in 1883. It represented the final step in establishing the pattern of inter-Association relationship that continued down to the recent years.

During these formative years, also taking form following the Civil War, came the state organizations, with their Conventions and committees, and their tendency to copy the forms of departmental activity already prominent in the life of the Movement as a whole. Thus the Associations sought, by both national and intermediate field organization, to assure their unity, and to provide for types of supervision deemed essential to their continuance and growth.

The wide geographical area covered by the hundreds of local As-

sociations necessarily brought wide diversity of constituency into the organization. Direct assembly was seldom feasible. Representative forms of participation were required. Under the plan of conventions prevailing until 1924, the assemblies were too infrequent and too regional in representation to permit close acquaintance, confidence, wise planning, sound budgeting, and the preparation of a significant strategy. It was the hope of the National Council that these shortcomings might be overcome, as they were in part. The long continuance of the "dual-agency" system of supervision divided loyalty, and resulted in an uneven development of the field. Associations that had first created the structure found themselves unable to carry it. They found also, that they had to a large extent lost control of that which they had created.

The various stages of national reorganization following the Constitutional Convention in 1923 have already been described (p. 144). Here it is necessary only to restate that the organization of the National Council represented essentially a recapture of the national organization by the local Associations, placing them once more in command of their supervisory agencies.

The national reorganization in 1923 and 1924 represented many compromises. Certain aspects remained for the further field reorganization following 1933 to complete. Notable among these was the creation of "areas," composed usually of more than one state, wherein the resident Associations once again took control of the programs of co-operative service therein required and determined on the financial support of national services. Although the advent of the revised plan for "area" development appears promising, it has been criticized in certain quarters as not providing a sufficiently intensive development of any given field.

Possibly no institutional pattern in Y.M.C.A. history achieved greater prominence than that pertaining to methods of field supervision, usually referred to as "the agency problem." The long years of discussion of policies for state and international committee services, although frequently appearing to be "political" in temper, were genuine efforts to provide a cohesion and strategy necessary to the accomplishment of chosen purposes in so vast a field. These real objectives of supervisory agency effort were never more clearly or convincingly stated than by General Secretary John R. Mott in 1916 under the heading, "Guiding Principles and Chief Points of Emphasis in the Policy of the International Committee" (pp. 136-137). They have represented the basis for experiments and readjustments in the adaptation of agency services since that time.

Beyond such impressive formulations, however, the actual means by which genuine unity of effort is secured and maintained in any great association are worthy of special study. Only in part has this been achieved in the Y.M.C.A. Various means have been employed. An Official Roster of Member Associations and of their staffs with stated

qualifications; and annual reporting of essential information regarding local activities, costs, memberships, etc., are means that tend to support the sense of common interest. Participation in conferences, institutes, sections of the professional association, etc., have enhanced the sense of unity.

If it be fair to assume that structural readjustments have resulted in a considerable degree of formal unity among these widely scattered Associations and their members, it may be equally fair to observe that this unity probably rests more largely upon purely structural or logical grounds than upon any substantial common conviction or philosophy among the actual membership itself. The secretaries, it is true, may have found some basis of common approach and concern for status that gives genuine quality to what is frequently referred to as "the Brotherhood," that is, the professional organization. It is not equally clear that member groups share this feeling or possess any substitute for it. Readiness as individuals to give to various non-local, and even foreign, enterprises of the Associations, is sometimes cited as evidence of a genuine Movement-wide loyalty or sense of solidarity. This may be questioned. It may be doubted whether there is any more substantial bond of unity among Association members as such than might be expected for example among high-school boys as such over the entire country. Interest, experience, sense of belonging, are first of all local, and often only local.

The superstructure is probably only structural and ideological, in the minds of the relatively few whose experience has, for one reason or another, reached out to embrace this wider concept. Among these are certain student, young men's, "Y's mens," and older boys' groupings who have already participated in wider contacts; and who seek to continue and broaden these along with other widening experiences.

Although the principle of local autonomy was once strongly institutionalized and so remains, the collective body of Associations has achieved an established identity. This also rests in part upon institutional aspects. Although localism is still the dominant aspect of the member organizations themselves, the sense of identity and relationship with other local organizations has again become perhaps as strong as it has ever been. Many common Association enterprises, such as summer school, professional societies, publications, security provisions, etc., effectively support this sense of unity. The influence of national organization in other more or less similar agencies, such as the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, Y.M. & Y.W.H.A., and other groups should not be overlooked. Powerful social forces, such as education, the relation between public and private agencies, taxation, financing of philanthropy, etc., effectively stress the need for organizational solidarity, not only within loosely federated types of organization, but also between organizations of differing traditions and objectives. The churches; the service clubs and lodges; the daily traffic of commerce, industry, and agriculture; the political, educational, welfare and defense activities of state

and nation also represent patterns of inter-local relationship familiar to all in an increasingly interdependent society. In general, local institutional self-sufficiency has been challenged on every hand. These larger tendencies belie the theory held by some: that the Y.M.C.A. is no more than a list of independent local organizations to be designated only by the multiple term—"The Associations." These have been more zealous to protect local autonomy than to sense the inevitable interdependence that gives to the Young Men's Christian Association whatever validity and promise it may have.

#### F. STANDARD BUILDING PATTERNS

The institutional pattern relating to the standard building trend in the Y.M.C.A. may be defined as follows:

##### *The Standard Building*

- represented the evolution of a physical counterpart to the development of the fourfold program emphasis and its extreme departmentalization;
- occupied the interest and activity of lay boards, staff, and members in constructive programs of activity, and concreted worthy community values;
- involved investments and practices of operation that heightened the influence of typical sound business patterns of the American community but were not always readily responsive to human need as such;
- tended to commit the Association permanently to a building-centered approach to community need, and sharply limited its extension among communities unable or unready to provide such equipments;
- challenged the capacity of the Association's genius to explore and serve other fields of youth need on a basis comparable to its achievement in cities.

##### *Comment*

Through the earlier decades before modern buildings existed, it was usual for members of the Associations to gather in the "rooms" for their meetings, for social intercourse, educational classes, etc. The Association was not only a voluntary association, but one definitely focused in a place of assembly, to which the accepted group itself repaired. These young men had typically outlined plans that took account of individuals throughout the community, and of some other common needs of community life. But the focus of their work was in the place of assembly. This development was in considerable contrast to the original London Association, which had been organized within the residence quarters in the place of employment itself as a method of domi-

nating that environment with Christian ideals. Only later did that Association go elsewhere to meet other groups from like establishments.

The shift of early Association effort from place of living and work to a common place of meeting, though natural and commendable in many ways, undoubtedly served to build up a twofold institutional influence. It set a pattern of assembly and fellowship that established itself primarily around only the leisure hours and relations of young men. At the same time it built up increasingly attractive facilities providing services desired by young men and patronized by them.

In the narrower sense of "institution" there was established a building-centered tendency that few Associations have escaped, and the influence of which has not yet been fully appreciated. Members frequented the buildings perhaps chiefly for what these increasingly elaborate equipments gave them. As a result, they came to think of the Associations as privilege-dispensing centers, and of their annual fees as club dues permitting access thereto.

In more recent years, there has appeared some questioning about this pattern that had so dominated the activity of the modern Y.M.C.A. A forerunner to this more recent questioning was the religious meetings held in industrial plants at the noon hour as a means, perhaps ineffective though often apparently appreciated, of "reaching" the industrial worker on his own ground. The plan failed to take account of the growing tension in the industrial situation; but it did, nevertheless, propose to make the influence of the Association effective in a decentralized manner. In the same way, the advent of the Hi-Y club, as an organized modification of the typical community organization pattern, was identified with the high-school life and setting. Many of the earlier identifications of Y.M.C.A. effort with resident populations, such as college or military groups, represented the same principle. In the present-day tendency to stress the formation of neighborhood groupings among boys may be seen the most recent and one of the most potent examples of adjustment away from building-institutionalism toward the original voluntary-association principle.

It would be both unfortunate and unfair to discuss the Association building movement primarily in negative terms. Instead, the many notable contributions that derived from them should be fully recognized, such as

- the contribution to community solidarity and good-feeling which typically accompanied the efforts to provide the building, and the satisfaction and pride enjoyed in its use;
- the contribution to the architecture achievement of the community whenever a truly distinctive and beautiful Association building was erected, as in later years, symbolizing as in the allied instances of worthily planned churches and schools an alluring ideal for personal and community achievement.
- the contribution to community life and events made possible (in

earlier years particularly) by place of large assembly, or (more recently) by provisions for forums, luncheon clubs, and many other groups, and for recreational activity.

So to recognize these and other worthy contributions made by the standard modern Association building should not, however, lead to overlooking some of the less favorable results, such as

- the heavy burden entailed for enlarged staffs by efficient management and administration of these costly new means for Christian service among youth;
- the inevitable problems of maintenance, obsolescence, and replacement, which became increasingly difficult under changing community attitudes and uncertain economic conditions;
- the all-too-common problem of indebtedness, whether due to the very common and understandable tendency to build beyond available means, or to operating deficits however caused, with subsequent shackling effects of heavy interest burdens;
- the effect of building structure upon program crystallization, with attendant difficulties in the way of adjusting both programs and buildings to emergent needs; and the inevitable effect of concentrating program contacts and efforts too largely within the building itself and in adjacent areas rather than in the whole community field;
- the selective or deterrent effect of the rates necessary for the member to pay toward the cost of services provided upon the constituency, resulting in affiliation typically of only those in relatively better economic position;
- the unfortunate confusion of the whole concept of affiliation with the Association as a member with access to the special facilities of the building, resulting in substantially obscuring the nature of purposive affiliation and its appeal;
- the tendency to weight boards of directors unduly with those most capable for and chiefly interested in operative or management problems, to the virtual neglect of laymen equally competent in the field of technical program work and social engineering;
- the advent of the spirit and practice of the vested interest, as a result of which the Association itself came to consider innovations in its relations with youth services with regard first of all to their effect upon existing economic values and problems of continued financial support;
- the influence of the building movement upon the extension of Associations into new fields of the same community, or into entirely different communities; leading to concentration of effort in city centers with their greater resources, and neglect of smaller communities and rural areas with less resources but greater population.

Although it may not be assumed that these categories of less favorable results of the highly institutionalized building pattern were not matched by many similar problems encountered in Associations without such modern equipments, it is clear that candor today compels recognition of at least these kinds of difficulty in contemplating the course ahead of the Association Movement.

#### G. METHODS OF FINANCING

The institutional pattern relating to methods of financing may be defined as follows:

##### *Methods of Financing*

- relied primarily upon the interest and ability of the individual member and participant to pay the cost of services rendered, and only secondarily upon community, corporation, or other supplementation, regardless of whether such support assumed or assured the pursuit of certain policies;
- created methods of approach to the community's private means that unlocked unprecedented resources for both capital and current needs;
- established expanding budgetary expectations increasingly dependent upon continuous business prosperity and ill-prepared to sustain income levels from members or contributors during periods of economic depression;
- joined experimentally in over 250 communities in joint current finance efforts with other agencies, seeking an equitable application of community resources to community need.

##### *Comment*

The increase in capital holdings entailed by the great building movement affords a necessary background for study of the development of technical methods for financing Association work. It has been shown (p. 168) that net property and funds increased more than 1000 per cent between 1900 and 1936. The first part of this period saw the perfection of the community-wide short-term finance campaign, which opened the private resources of those within and beyond the regular constituency of the Association to aggressive appeals on behalf of many causes. A by-product of these efforts was the greatly increased endowment that building donors and other friends were persuaded to contribute.

Current financing, however, was the more significant field wherein to examine the operation of institutional patterns of financing. The earliest Associations had provided for payment of dues by members. The pattern of annual dues for annual membership was established early and has persisted quite generally down to the present in contrast to membership and financial obligation in agencies such as the church,

where the one was continuous and the other wholly optional, even though strongly urged. Very early also appeared the practice of what was called "life-membership," which was, however, merely a device for requesting a somewhat larger contribution from the few able and ready to give it. It soon became evident that local Associations could easily spend more money than they could expect to receive directly from either of the two sources mentioned. There were those in the community able and willing to give money toward annual expense requirements without reference to status or recognition in the membership. Associations learned to budget expenditures as much beyond membership and other income as they could demonstrate the generosity of the community would bear. The annual finance campaign for current expenses itself became one of the most widespread of Association institutions.

It became common for railroad, industrial, and other concerns to look with favor upon the making of grants in aid of Association programs when these were related directly to their own employees who also contributed in comparable terms (pp. 54 and 119). It was frequently charged that the money contributed by organized industries, or by individual contributors of wealth, was directly related to the control of Association policy in the donors' interest. This charge is and has always been easy to make, and difficult either to prove or deny. In some instances the facts undoubtedly support such charges. In 1937, contributed or appropriated income toward the current expenses of a group of railroad Associations amounted to 14.8 per cent, though in some Associations these items amounted to more than 40 per cent. In a group of "industrial Associations," for the same year, such contributed or appropriated income amounted to 41.1 per cent, with some Associations receiving as much as 80 per cent of their current income from such sources. Moneys so contributed included what was given by workers as well as by companies, but did not take account of company capital contributions toward physical plants used by the Associations. For all types of Associations, the corresponding figure averages about 25 per cent from year to year. The income of railroad and industrial Associations would probably not exceed 10 per cent of the aggregate income of all Associations in any year. However, it is a matter of record that some of the earlier support given by railway systems was justified by them on the ground that it assisted them in dealing with labor agitation (p. 54). It is probable that the iron and steel, textile, mining, lumber, shipbuilding, and other industries that had contributed over 4 million dollars for buildings in smaller fields and over 200 thousand dollars for current expenses in 1918 believed they could rely upon the "zone of agreement" policy of the Y.M.C.A. (p. 119); and that the Y.M.C.A. would never join the labor forces in opposition. Certainly also, despite many instances of close working relationships with workers, both organized and unorganized, as in transportation, textiles, and other fields, the Association has down to the present failed to win the com-

plete confidence of organized labor. This failure is probably largely due to the frequent belief of labor forces, whether justified or not, that the methods and policies of the Association are tacitly if not openly identified with the forces against them. It is conceivable, however, that the same conditions might obtain apart from the pattern of financial dependence that has so strongly institutionalized representatives of management in the controlling boards and quite as definitely institutionalized the non-eligibility of representatives of workers.

Despite these conditions affecting policy control, the relative importance of the issue may be easily exaggerated. In the annual expenditure budget more than 75 per cent on the average has come in recent years from members and participants. It is conceivable, in view of factors tending to curtail philanthropy of every type, that Associations may be obliged to rely to even greater degree upon money from member sources. If so, one of the longest-standing institutional patterns will have been modified through necessity if not through preference.

Only incidental to the present section but worthy of mention is the relatively recent tendency to underwrite approved budgets of agencies of supervision through local Associations accepting to pay a percentage of their own local budgeted expenditures. The long-established pattern of appealing for private gifts in support of agency services has led to the over-expansion of expenditure programs and debt burdens, which became an important factor in the formulation of the National Council in 1924 and the inauguration of the area type of field organization during recent years. Although financing through individual appeal is still preferred in providing for the foreign work program, and may be relied on as a secondary means in the case of field services in this country, it is clear that a significant variation of an older pattern has taken place at this point.

The advent of local community chests, and of joint community financing for social welfare enterprises, constitutes the principal variation in the pattern of Association financing since the World War. Participation in the Community Chest has never been obligatory for any agency. Each year some agencies join, while others withdraw. Whether or not, in a given year, the Association seeks to raise its contribution requirements through this relationship by its own efforts (p. 170) the influence of the Chest's methods of approach to community interpretation and social planning, as well as to specific financial administration, must affect Associations in Chest and non-Chest cities profoundly. These matters are further discussed on page 172. At this point the reference is related directly to the independence of the Association in its approach to the community, as to time, interpretation, amount sought, and subsequent accounting. Public opinion and good will have always been essential to the financial support of Associa-

the Community-Chest movement, to express its support on the basis of broader criteria than those of any single agency, and in terms of standards that seek to make the essential services equally available to all.

#### H. ARTICULATION OF LAY AND PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP

The institutional pattern relating to the articulation of lay and professional leadership may be defined as follows:

##### *Leadership*

- by laymen, especially younger laymen, so far as possible, as appropriate to a lay membership association among youth;
- reinforced, stimulated and guided, but never substituted, by salaried professional workers, chiefly on a selective career basis;
- supported by such forms of professional and interprofessional association as shall set and maintain adequate standards of service, and improve them experimentally.

##### *Comment*

The Young Men's Christian Association may take some pride in the demonstration of a relationship between lay and professional workers to which a large degree of its unique development may be attributed. From the beginning it had made an institution of its use of laymen. Later it developed and institutionalized the modes of relationship by which the services of permanent salaried workers were articulated with those of lay, volunteer workers. The problems therein represented warrant some further analysis.

For many years following the founding of the first Associations there were of course no such staff officers. The expanding activities of the local organization were planned and carried through altogether by young laymen (p. 23). Following the advent of the Association building movement shortly after the close of the Civil War, however, the number of secretaries increased and became greatly diversified (p. 95).

There has hardly been a time during its long history except at the very start when the subject of lay-professional relationships in the Y.M.C.A. was not a live topic. It did not usually become a topic of debate, however, as it did in 1895 and the years following (p. 97ff.). However, with a growing experience in the handling of group activities and individuals, methods were refined, training organized, and career objectives defined for those considered fit to carry these responsibilities. This development reflected the growing sense of professional responsibility in many fields outside the Y.M.C.A. Such leaders, although relying heavily upon lay interest and responsibility, were still hardly prepared to admit that untrained part-time efforts could equal their own.

The creation of a professional service requiring, yet independent of, amateur participation constituted a problem still far from solution.

Unlike the field of professional social work, the Association has magnified the rôle of the lay leader, not only as member of a controlling board or committee, but also as an actual leader of group activity, and as a consultant. The tendency to use laymen as leaders necessitated plans of leader training that were, however, not always provided. The Y.M.C.A., like the Boy Scout Movement (where some 200,000 lay troop leaders are used), has continued to place confidence in the possibility of so choosing and training lay leaders that valid character outcomes may result. Though the professional worker requires extended specialized preparation for his work, he has sought to prepare lay workers to approximate, under careful supervision, what he would himself do. This is a confusing prospect, not yet approaching satisfactory clarification. It appears to represent definite modification of the institutionalized principle of an exclusive lay leadership, the ultimate success of which cannot be foreseen.

In 1936, 953 out of 1,082 local Associations and branches were employing one or more staff officers. The total number of staff officers so employed in the United States was 3,607. About 40 per cent of these represented a staff of 1. The median size of staff was 5.6; the range was from 1 to 49 in a local branch, or to 168 in one of the larger metropolitan cities taken as a whole.

The continuance of laymen in leading officeships and directing boards, with power to employ and discharge executives, indicated a pattern of authority that did not always comport with the sense of partnership considered typical of Association relationships. The problem of sound financial management, and the ever-present need for the leadership of business men in rallying the community support, placed the typical business leader in a key position in Association management. Some executives were of sufficient stature to guide the ability brought by strong business leaders into channels of great helpfulness. Others were dominated, and unable to do so. In the former instance, the resources of staff became an effective instrument for authentic study of the changing needs of boys and young men, and not too greatly disturbed by immediate financial pressures. In other cases, Association programs were at the mercy of particular types of financial pressure. Even the approach to young men to become members was often conditioned by emphasis on services that could be made to yield income.

It was natural for the early staffs to reflect the business and industrial patterns of organization with which they were surrounded. Such patterns have survived down to the present without substantial modification. The general secretary, responsible to the board of directors for administration of program and for budget control, added staff associates able to undertake aspects of this program and responsible to him. It was natural, as the departmental program structure grew in acceptance, to add associates able to bring some specialized contribution to these several phases. As the volume of activities grew, in the absence of any

effective philosophy of the unity of personality or of program, unity of organization was sought chiefly through the executive function. The executive sought to combine the several departmental leaders into an effective team of which he was active as coach, but with which his relationship was more nearly that of executive with authority. That this was so regarded by the local board was evidenced not only by the general secretary's exercise of the right to employ and discharge, but by his being given a much higher salary, which continues to exist down to the present. In a study of secretarial salaries in 1937, covering all Associations employing staffs of 2 or more, it was found that the executive salary exceeded that of his nearest associate by a median percentage of 62.1. Latterly this practice has been questioned, and is being somewhat revised in favor of more nearly common standards of compensation. More nearly mutual professional relations have gained ground, and have been caught up in various latter-day statements of approved staff practice.

The rigid emphasis upon departments that has characterized the program approaches of the Association for many years has also, until very recently, determined the work assignments and titles of staff members. This strongly institutional aspect has been modified experimentally by a number of Associations, which have given to their more versatile staff members certain responsibilities covering an age classification. Although continuing to make their contribution as specialists in their fields, as for example, in physical education, such secretaries also undertake responsibility for integrating the entire program offering as it affects boys' or young men's groups as such. This recent trend is viewed with some concern by those who fear that the more complete resources of careful specialized program study will tend to become dissipated. It is as yet by no means clear that this newer "age-level" plan of staff organization will prevail over the older departmental form of organization. The situation offers an excellent example of resistant institutional influence expressed in terms of staff personnel.

The very first secretarial meeting in 1871 was a modest professional effort to share the novel experience of a group of young men who, without preparatory training, had found themselves suddenly thrust into positions of marked community prominence. Many older community organizations and institutions surrounded them, including the long-established churches, with which it became their duty to work out valid and significant relationships. The annual meetings of these secretaries, most of whom were working alone, indicated a growing group self-consciousness and loyalty, which gained considerable strength with the years. Formal organization of these workers also took place at this first meeting. Work was carried forward by assignment and by committee methods. Devotional features were prominent, but much time was given to review of many most specific and practical methods of work.

Training of new young men to share in this work received early attention. Two centers were chosen wherein carefully chosen young men might receive apprentice training over a period of six or eight weeks. In due course arrangements were made for both longer academic-professional training for candidates and for summer institute training for those in service. Those superintending the novel gymnasium programs were, after a period of years, formally invited and included with the "secretaries" in the annual meetings. Special assemblies of such "departmental" groups appeared. Many of these found further differentiation by geographical areas advantageous. The General Secretaries' Association later became the Association of Employed Officers. This name was continued until 1936, when it was changed to the Association of Secretaries.

Discussions such as that on "The Increase of Efficiency" in 1906 resulted, by 1911, in the formal convention action earlier mentioned creating a special continuous group styled The Annual Conference on the Association Profession, to guide the growing secretarial body in its quest of standards. This group has met annually since that time, and has initiated many projects that have been endorsed by the professional group and that have led to formal legislative action by the International Convention and National Council. The advent of formal courses for the training of secretaries represented growing awareness of need for basic preparation. These courses were offered at the level of a technical college. In 1921, training at graduate level was offered at the Y.M.C.A. Graduate School in Nashville. Summer schools established in eight different parts of the country gave institute courses of varying length, though these have tended latterly to become assemblies of a conference type. At the same time, longer formal courses have been set up by all of the institutions mentioned above, and by certain other recognized institutions of higher education and professional education. Beginning with about 1924, increasing concern was manifested regarding the quality of those entering Y.M.C.A. service. Educational requirements were advanced to full college graduation in 1933, with preferred fields of professional study, in part at graduate level, outlined (but not as yet required). A plan of mutual death benefit insurance, the Employed Officers' Alliance, was organized in 1880; and a pension plan, the Retirement Fund, Inc., in 1922.

The life-work or career concept, which became articulate as the tenure of the first generation of secretaries increased, became after 1900 a highly institutionalized test of professional loyalty. Recruits were faced with the need of declaring their purpose in this regard at the very outset. A plan of recruiting, known as the Fellowship Plan (157), was developed in 1910 by Charles K. Ober, one novel feature of which provided that a tentative commitment was acceptable if not desirable during the probationary or try-out period of at least one year, the candi-

date being free to accept or reject permanent appointment at the end of that time. This plan grew in influence up until the World War, after which conditions surrounding the recruiting of new leadership sharply changed. Emphasis in later years has been placed upon competence rather than career purpose in recruits, upon a carefully administered process of admission to secretarial recognition, and upon improvement of local education experience. By these means a sense of professional solidarity has been created and sustained, which, although admittedly dependent upon continued employment by the Y.M.C.A., seeks none-the-less to maintain standards of training and workmanship that will stand appraisal upon broader grounds.

The latter-day development designated as "group work" represents a growing body of scientific practice among agencies using the group technique predominantly. It has given rise to a strong movement for recognizing those working professionally in any or all such agencies as a new profession of social group work or informal education. The growing literature in this field and the appearance of a number of professional training centers offering courses along this line have confronted Association workers with a need for re-examining their own practice and their traditional professional affiliation. Among the questions raised are (a) how far Association secretaries exhibit a professional type of behavior at their work; (b) how far specialized training, though provided as previously mentioned, has actually been appropriated and used by such secretaries; (c) how far it is possible for those associated with any one agency to achieve and maintain truly professional standards of practice *within* the institutional frame-work.

The recent group work emphasis appears to draw heavily upon the special insights of progressive education, but to align itself chiefly with social work, possibly because it appears to be a natural counterpart of the longer established field of "social case work"; and because of the increasing recognition by each of these phases of social work of the need for the insights and techniques of the other. This latter development, still to come to its full impact, has considerable significance for the "career" aspect of Y.M.C.A. service.

In these efforts to develop professional quality of services within lay control of services may be seen the crucial problem of articulation of lay and professional leadership. Around this problem there is need for clear discrimination as to function, as to the respective policy-making rôles, and as to methods for democratic determination of final authority. Upon such discrimination the possibility of timely adaptation to changing conditions will largely depend.

### I. COMMUNITY RELATIONS

The institutional pattern relating to the Association's community relations may be summarized as follows:

*The Association*

- a local, independent, voluntary society, relying upon the confidence of the community in its work, making its own characteristic approach to the community in selection of constituency, in locating centers of activity, in securing financial support, in the evaluation and interpretation of its program, in extension;
- a private agency, unrelated to public authority or financial support, concerned to conserve any uniqueness deriving from its selective, pioneering, experimental character in a time when substantial extension of publicly financed educational and recreational activities seems socially desirable;
- a co-operative agency, among many other similar agencies, in various types of Community Councils and Chests seeking improved standards and coverage, yet eager to retain its own identity and initiative in applying its resources in personality and means to the service of community need according to its own vision.

*Comment*

The fundamental identity of the Association with its community setting has been noted. In every period of its development the Association, as a voluntary association, has been clearly distinguishable from other community institutions, and from the legal community as expressed in the municipality. The Associations have, to be sure, carried on certain functions also carried on by the community, such as those relating to formal education, including latterly adult education, physical education and recreational activities, employment services, etc. Other agencies have undertaken some of these services as well; and have even seemed in competitive relationship with Associations for the interest or patronage of citizens. In the free and largely unorganized community life of all except the more recent decades, each agency undertook what it wished, survived or passed out of existence on the basis of demand, and identified its continuity with an established validity of outlook and service not to be challenged.

Where the Association was in a relatively strong position, it sometimes made the mistake of assuming that it represented the entire community and could function acceptably for it. The assumption and policy were undoubtedly mistaken. As a voluntary association based on selective interests religious in character, it was manifestly unable to reflect all interests or long hold the confidence of all religious points of view.

Reference has been made (p. 170) to the establishment of community chests and councils of social agencies. These organizations, though often of independent origin, represented functions of joint responsibility for financing and later for planning the use of community resources toward meeting the total community need. Many problems of adjustment have arisen. In general, an established agency such as

the Y.M.C.A., with nearly a century of continuous service in many communities, found some difficulty in accepting any form of joint or super-control. The effect of such a new agency seemed necessarily to limit independence of action and choice of constituency; and perhaps would have an effect upon the method of program, type of building, and even standards of personnel. These aspects, others argued, stood greatly to gain from a common inter-agency approach backed by the public opinion of the entire community. Nevertheless, it was often feared that whatever might be distinctive would be lost under a common plan of planning, interpretation, and financing.

Many communities have turned with fresh hope to such newer forms of community organization as the co-ordinating councils. They have usually been more inclusive of the agencies of the community, and have seemed to work directly at specific problems such as crime, delinquency, etc. Many attempts have recently been made to define the respective areas of private-agency effort, as against those of strictly public agencies. All private, non-profit agencies seek to retain freedom of action, and distinctiveness of basic purpose and program philosophy. They are usually ready to give over or otherwise adjust specific services as public agencies demonstrate ability, or readiness, to undertake them.

Associations rightly consider that they represent a definite reflection of the community mind; and that they meet each year in the form of current financial campaigns what is essentially a plebiscite on the issue of community confidence. If some fail to meet this recurrent test successfully, further adjustments of leadership, program, or services are usually made, and continuity is usually (though by no means always) assured.

The progress toward co-ordination of local community services may in time lead to wider unity on a national or international scale. However promising may be the prospect for such co-ordination of community resources in planning and financing of social welfare, there does not as yet seem to be any reason to anticipate that such instrumentalities will greatly affect the unique appeal that particular agency programs have for particular persons or constituencies. It would appear unlikely that the whole civic population would move in unison around any common concept, unless it be the preservation of the democratic ideal. Even then, its necessarily varied applications would assuredly lead again to varied associational expressions, each of which, though devoted to this common object, would exhibit many specialized concomitant interests.

In the choice of field of service and of constituency, any voluntary association such as the Y.M.C.A. must run the risk of a degree of overlapping with the work of other agencies. Councils of Social Agencies, Chests, and Co-ordinating Councils will scarcely wish to define or restrict the characteristic purposes of any single agency, but they may wish to consult as to where, in view of the total community need, these specific purposes are to be applied. The Association's right to serve any con-

stituency whatever, and to appeal to the community for confidence and support rests first of all upon its own demonstration that it can perform such services efficiently. In this judgment, it is increasingly realized that disinterested outside points of view are desirable.

### J. PROTESTANT CHURCH IDENTIFICATION

The institutional pattern relating to the Association's Protestant Church identification may be defined as follows:

#### *Identification*

- with the historic stream of Protestant religious thought in the new world in ideology, in constituency, in aims, in method of affiliation;
- with the essential spirit of Protestant liberalism, rather than the theological distinctions that gave rise to extreme denominational differentiation, and with the practical interpretation of this spirit in life and work by laymen;
- with the strength and initiative of the leadership, clerical and lay, of the Protestant church constituency of the local community, seeking worthily, if unofficially, to unite their interest and resources on behalf of the social and religious education of youth in ways rarely feasible for one denomination to attempt alone;
- with the co-operative and ecumenical interest among American churches, seeking fresh means of unity in emphasis and impact upon the cultural trend.

#### *Comment*

The discussion under the "Formulation of Aims" reveals the significant place that identification with the Protestant Church Movement has had throughout Association history. The variations represented by vigorous Association work in predominantly Roman Catholic countries like Poland, the Philippines, Mexico, and certain South American countries, and the inclusion of non-Protestants in the membership and services of North American Associations need not lessen the force of this primary Protestant identification.

It was, first of all, an identification in lay terms, and in community terms, before it became institutionalized as a policy and pattern for the Association Movement as a whole. The young founders of Associations were usually members of Protestant denominations, who readily accepted the fact of such affiliation as an initial guarantee of the type of interest and conviction they deemed appropriate. They either mistrusted denominationalism as such, or placed little value upon it. They believed that in working within the vitality and freedom of the democratic spirit of American Protestantism and ignoring its divisions and sectarianism, they had a significant basis for applying vital religion to the needs of youth. These convictions and policies arose in a local com-

munity context, within personal experiences, long before they were subjects of formal legislative action.

Such institutional action through legislation, as in the Detroit and Portland Conventions of 1868 and 1869, were acceptable and persistent in their influence because they represented the more local, informal, and personal background of the early members just described. In 1868 fully half of the 280 Associations reporting had made "good moral character" their only qualification for active membership. By 1869 the stricter view prevailed by which evangelical church adherence was made a formal qualification for voting and office holding, and even for recognition of an Association as in good standing. As the decades lengthened, the observance of this criterion of regularity and orthodoxy became highly emotionalized. Loyalty to "the Basis," that is, to the maintenance of the Portland resolution as a rigid qualification for status and good standing, was contrasted with theological liberalism. The theological pattern and the organizational pattern were intertwined and confused. Attempts to clarify were rejected with heat (p. 122). Modifications were conceded reluctantly. The final official formulation of policy in 1933 amounted to a liberal victory won not so much upon the grounds of direct discussion of older issues as because of the wide-spread practice by the Associations themselves of ignoring the evangelical church limitation (p. 158).

Whatever weight may be assigned to such formal or legislative aspects of the relationship, the more fundamental affirmation of a primary Protestant church identification continued to be made. That the Association was "the right arm of the Church" was a constant claim by Association leaders, many of whom were outstanding churchmen as well. For many years a "Counseling Commission on Relations with the Churches," with an executive from the national staff, sought to elaborate the co-operative channels, and to eliminate the growing sense of divergence that many leaders in both churches and Associations felt. When this formally representative body was discontinued, a less formal body of general secretaries was set up to reassert a closer local community collaboration.

Yet in spite of the relationship which loyalty or logic might urge, the total community situation was pressing the Associations into a broader rôle with the Chests (in which churches were never included), with social agencies, and with other educational and recreational groups.

In broader terms, however, the Y.M.C.A. has cherished its recognition by and affiliation with the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, and the opportunities for collaboration through this most inclusive of Protestant agencies upon many timely projects of social, educational, and religious interest. Similar close relationships are enjoyed with the missionary agencies of the churches, in joint approaches in student centers, in local church federation efforts, etc. Association interest has been to some extent aroused in the rising ecumenical inter-

est, and in the Oxford and Edinburgh Conferences of World Christian groups (except Roman Catholic) in 1937. The International Council of Religious Education represents another interdenominational body, with which close working relationships are maintained. The World Conference of Christian Youth, in 1940, is also co-operatively sponsored. In the various great Protestant Christian efforts of earlier years, such as the Laymen's Missionary Movement (1910), The Men and Religion Forward Movement (1912), and the Interchurch World Movement (1920), Association leadership played a formative and continuous part, and often a very prominent one. The same may be said for the National Preaching Mission of 1937.

In these enterprises may be seen an increasing desire of the Association Movement to function not so much as a strictly *interdenominational* agency, made up on a formally representative basis, as a vitally Christian, if more largely a *non-denominational* or an *undenominational* agency, yet none-the-less closely identified with and a substantial reinforcement to the growing front of effective Protestant church contact and action among American youth.

#### K. DEFINITION OF SOCIAL POLICY

The institutional pattern relating to the definition of social policy may be described as follows:

##### *A Social Policy*

- defined primarily by its own characteristic genius as a voluntary association holding Christian objectives for individuals and society, and necessarily limited by a long period of conditioning in which institutionalized attitudes and practices resistant to prompt readjustment have grown up;
- related in concept and aim to the typical existing constituency it has chosen, and necessarily reflecting their problems and outlook on social affairs;
- committed thus to seek social change and progress largely through programs of education and action addressed to and through existing contacts until such time as the social challenges before these and other social groups are seen to be identical; or until other groups accept the Association as an appropriate medium of fellowship and action;
- concerned increasingly to join forces with diverse groups, religious, educational, social, economic, toward the education of a discriminating public opinion, toward wise decisions of policy and action upon public affairs, and toward courageous citizenship.

##### *Comment*

The unavoidable interdependence of "aims" and "social policy"

has been noted. Unless the aims be wholly other-worldly, they are obliged to represent desired modifications in the environment in which life and organizations exist. These social conditions represent in substantial degree the "subject matter" of aims, and supply the elements of definition.

The articulation of organizational aims in relation to social needs must be consistent with the organization's history and genius. Action cannot be taken solely in terms of what would be appropriate to social need. Organizational history represents a long conditioning of leaders and led. Neither can break from these complex patterns of habit to express conduct wholly unprepared for. The process of modification does work, but slowly. Therefore it is more proper to consider what evidence there is that a given organization has a social policy, and what has been its direction, than to appraise the organization's position solely in terms of what it may or may not have done at a particular time on any particular issue.

Undoubtedly, from all that has been said previously, the Young Men's Christian Associations have tended, almost throughout their history in this country, to reflect America's deep-seated faith in individual worth and achievement. During decades when young Americans were making their way in a new society, the Associations stood with them and facilitated their progress as they shared and sustained their self-defined faith. Men who had thus grown strong became the ruling if not the only voices shaping the thinking of local Associations. Youth voices became less distinct. Self-made men, with the social thinking of self-made men, dominated policies. The patronage that came from those economically strong, largely in terms of the opening of enlarged opportunity, was accepted in good faith as a natural extension of an already approved service. Little thought was given to the broader social significance of a too exclusive partnership with economic strength. Men trusted any extension of these institutionalized contacts, so sure were they of their value, without measuring the social cost of failure to maintain the confidence of the economically weak. Until the World War, the Associations thrived in a freely proffered good will among American communities, and largely turned deaf ears to the few prophetic voices that challenged their social course.

The adoption in 1919 of the Federal Council's statement of "Social Ideals," after some debate, must not be passed over lightly. It was an event of considerable significance. In fact, it represented somewhat of a turning point in the thinking of the Association Movement about itself. It is true that an official Committee of that Convention had sought, by time-honored pattern, to rephrase these novel proposals in innocuous form (1919, p. 195). It is true also that the proposals had first arisen from the student section of the Convention, representing in reality a challenge from youth. The attempted restatement did not prevail; nor were the youth representatives outflanked on the Convention floor. Of

course, such action in the Convention did not ensure conforming practices among the local Associations. All of the old patterns persisted; but a new formula had met and won the challenge at the bar of institutionalized behavior. The result would be a guide to later liberalization.

Associations found themselves in more recent years increasingly moving with the trend of the times. They made formal pronouncements from time to time that admittedly indicated how possible it was to assent to a particular social object without either "committing" their own Associations, or "wrecking" them as some feared, or really disturbing them at all. Such actions, however, had instrumental value. They opened the way for further articulation of social policy.

The growing sense of community mindedness in the boys' work field, for example, led insistently to efforts to reach into every neighborhood with club and other groupings. There was a growing determination not to be bound either by the necessity of costly building provisions nor by economic status in approaching the needs of boy life.

Association concern for the welfare of Negro young men and boys, begun with great devotion by Hunton and others in 1888, received in the beneficence of Julius Rosenwald a challenging demonstration of interracial good will. The Association has sought gradually to overcome its own regrettable shortcomings in the practice of discrimination. For some years, it has been a voted and carefully observed policy of the National Council not to hold its meetings under conditions where full hospitality may not be accorded members of the Council and staff regardless of race.

Activities toward peace have also had an increasing share of attention. This was to be expected from an organization that had long carried forward, through its foreign service, a program of international friendship abroad. Its participation in the World's Alliance of Y.M.C.A.'s, the World Student Christian Federation (through the student section) and other international bodies, not to mention its close relationship with the Canadian Associations from the beginning, have conditioned the Movement toward peaceful objectives. Through participation in policy determinations as a member group in the National Peace Conference, and in publication service for this and the Emergency Peace Campaign of the American Friends' Service Committee, the present-day Association policy is attempting to move with the best supporters of peaceful change toward a warless world.

Until recent years, there had been no instances of efforts affecting public policy through legislation since the early attempts of the first Executive Committee nearly sixty years ago, to work in the New York legislature for abolition of vice and indecent literature. In recent years the problem of social security became the occasion of discussion and publication, which led finally to participation in the campaign for the adoption of the federal Social Security Act. The Association's chief concern was to secure, if possible, the inclusion in that Act of the Associa-

tion's own workers, then and still regarded with other non-profit agencies as an "exempted" group. The Association has never contemplated becoming a "pressure group" as such; but apparently is ready to work by legislative means for some social objectives lying beyond its own power as a single organization to achieve. One such recent "cause" has been the consumers' co-operative movement. This has not as yet led to legislative effort; but it did result in co-operation in handling the literature for the tour of Kagawa of Japan, under the auspices of the Federal Council of Churches, and in other assistance in presenting the challenge of this movement to the American people.

In general, present-day Association leaders have considered that their social advocacy would be effective only as they themselves first sought to apply Christian social principles in their own relationships as employers. Formal action in 1931 to this effect provided a base line of policy upon which the social security efforts in Washington and other activities have rested. Notable among these efforts has been the basic re-examination of problems relating to compensation standards and conditions of work among the more than ten thousand full-time workers employed by the local Associations in this country. The trend in recent years toward labor organization among workers in non-profit employment appears likely to present the Y.M.C.A. with necessity for fresh decisions of policy in the field of labor relations. There is no desire to evade responsibility for dealing fairly with this admittedly new situation. The outcomes are still in the future. In the meantime, exclusion of Y.M.C.A. and related workers from the coverage of the Social Security Act has led to the establishment of a Savings and Security Plan for Association workers under terms roughly comparable to those of the federal Act. Efforts to safeguard standards of compensation and to improve working conditions should be mentioned; especially through recommendations of the National Board on "Labor Policies of the Young Men's Christian Associations" (164).

These examples indicate how far actions such as those taken in formal Conventions in 1931 and since have been given reality. These pronouncements in 1931 on open platform, interracial relations, unemployment, disarmament, liquor and narcotic control, non-discriminatory immigration laws, and other topics illustrate the range of social interest upon which the Associations have now found expression. The Association of Secretaries in 1933 discussed, among other subjects, "The increase among the secretariat of information, insight, concern, and competence for leadership in social education and intelligent social action."

The National Council itself authorized in 1934 the creation of a national Public Affairs Committee, which has not hesitated to bring forward at frequent intervals matters of public concern and proposed lines of action. There has been due caution not to run ahead of the desires and authorization of local Associations.

As an example of the direction of recent effort, an action from the National Young Men's Assembly in 1937 is cited:

We believe that democracy in the political and economic sphere—however difficult it sometimes is to operate efficiently—best serves the human personality and results in the greatest good for the greatest number. *We believe, therefore, that the Y.M.C.A. should assume a position of active, positive leadership in education for, and practice of, democratic procedure.* We are convinced that Y.M.C.A.'s should be centers for intelligent group thinking on current political and social problems.

*We earnestly urge that our Y.M.C.A.'s take a lead in thorough-going citizenship education among young people.* Expansion of governmental activity and the closer relation of government today to the lives of each of us makes all the more necessary the continuous, informed exercise of citizen interest. The "Y" should give special attention to education of young voters in connection with local and national elections.

We believe that the best interests of workers and of society as a whole will be served by the organization of workers. We endorse the principle of collective bargaining in industry. The relative merits of industrial and craft unionism in various situations we feel the need to study more carefully. We believe that workers and managers must develop a larger and more responsive social conscience, and recognize the necessity of accepting the obligations that accompany privileges. We believe both in the right to work and the right to strike; and we believe that Government must accept the rôle of arbiter when necessary in the public interest.

The consumer co-operation movement has a place in our economic and social system and should, we believe, be given the same support by governmental units accorded to private business.

We believe strongly in the merit system in public office, and urge local groups to study how they can use their influence for extension of it, especially in municipal and state governments.

The fellows at the Assembly strongly endorsed governmental programs for guidance, education, and creation of employment for young people, specifically commanding legislation that (a) forbids regular employment in industry of youths under sixteen years of age; (b) provides aids for those over sixteen who wish to continue in the regular school system; and (c) provides continued and improved work opportunities for unemployed out-of-school youth between the ages of sixteen and twenty-three. How these aims can be achieved should be the subject of earnest study and actual consultation with public officers on the part of many of our groups. They also commended the action of the World Y.M.C.A. Conference which said: "We believe that young people must be challenged to put forth the utmost in individual effort to find or make their own places in the economic order, but we believe that homes, religious societies, schools, industries, social welfare agencies, and governments must accept responsibility for providing guidance, specific preparation, and opportunity."

The depression and post-depression years have introduced many new elements into the field of social policy. The profound insecurity of so large a proportion of the population has introduced many for the first time to the fundamental rôle of government in relation to the welfare of all of the people. The realization that this welfare is not a matter of indifference to any person or organization has placed the question of method squarely in the foreground. It is realized that the full measure of public responsibility will not be assumed and cannot be maintained without informed public opinion. The Associations are seeking to take an active part in the creation of a socially minded public opinion. In so doing, they must reckon with those who see neither in basic social conditions nor in the question of method anything that should lead the Associations to depart from their long-accepted rôle of avoidance.

Increasingly, however, Association members and leaders are unwilling to remain either silent or inactive. It appears that the question for the Associations will be whether they can find a formula in keeping with their characteristic genius, by which they may become more active participants in shaping the future of the culture that sustains them. Once more, objectives and social conditions unite in a test of the adaptability of the Association. It must consider whether it dare guide its policy upon current need rather than upon its own successful past. If it dare seek so to do, it must consider how effectively and promptly to redirect its processes and resources toward what it wishes to accomplish.

## CHAPTER VIII

# INSTITUTIONAL ADAPTATION IN THE Y.M.C.A.

THE VARIOUS institutional patterns discussed in the preceding chapter at no time represented impersonal, independent or static elements. Though apparently less fluid and transient than the greater part of the human activity about them, these patterns could never be said to have achieved more than relative permanence. In defining them, it has been necessary, in most instances, to suggest at least a few of the changes manifested over the years if their character and continuity were to be identified at all. In short, these related patterns exhibited a capacity for adaptation that requires to be better understood if the direction and influence of institutional development are to be in any significant degree controlled. To what extent they may be so controlled must be examined.

These institutional patterns were also essentially personal in nature. Indeed, all institutional structures derive finally from persons. The character of institutional phenomena is dependent first of all upon the nature of the individuals who have shared in establishing and perpetuating them. Institutional development within the Y.M.C.A. necessarily begins with the natural endowment and experience of those who are or have been members. Each group relation entered by such persons, whether the groups were consciously related to or sponsored by the organization or not, had some part in shaping the attitudes that have contributed concreteness and survival power to the established form.

The examination of adaptive process in a specific organization such as the Young Men's Christian Association implies not only the recognition of the psychological basis of such processes in individuals, but also an understanding of the group and associational experiences within which they emerge. It calls for a study of how these may be modified, and how, if at all, such modification may proceed in desired directions. Such an analysis is the purpose of this chapter.

### I. ADAPTIVE PROCESS IN THE INDIVIDUAL MEMBER

The young men and boys who come into their first Association affiliation are already profoundly conditioned by previous experience. Though this affiliation may later become a factor of prominence, it is

at the beginning an incidental and a relatively late aspect of the developing social experience of the individual. This is inevitable. Even the youngest admitted to membership (few younger than nine) is already highly conditioned. Early childhood learnings in home, school, and other institutions, and contacts with the culture have already formed intricate habit patterns that only new learnings from new experience can modify. Diversity of homes, social background, religion, race, occupational status, have profoundly affected each individual through countless unique adaptations.

Moreover, among those so responding to the appeal of membership in the Association are many who do not remain as members very long. After the first period or year they may drop out. The experience may not measure up to anticipations. Money for dues may not be available. Specific needs may have been met. New interests may take precedence and lead to other expressions. Selection takes place among those who become members. By individual adaptive processes, the experience is for some relatively brief and final; for others, instrumental and survival.

It was among those so surviving that the institutional tendency appeared. It became a serial pattern carried forward beyond the period of affiliation of any given individual. It constituted a conditioning of behavior, an essentially psychological process.

The pattern of constituency that resulted has been described as predominantly male, youthful, of Protestant affiliation, newly located in cities, identified chiefly in business and commercial occupations, and interested in fellowship around religious, educational, social, and other activities. In so far as this pattern continued over the years it did so as an aspect of the outlook and behavior of those identified as members at any given time—a learned behavior conditioned by habit toward continuance and to change, if at all, by slow reconditioning. That the pattern itself did change has been shown previously (p. 232). Such changes were, in fact, the changed behaviors and habits of response of members and constituency down the years. How shall such changes be best understood?

Basic to this understanding are the intricate and universal adaptive processes of the human body itself. These processes Dr. Alexis Carrel, for example, classified into two categories: intra-organic and extra-organic. Each, he considered essential to duration. He observed,

The striking contrast between the durability of our body and the transitory character of its elements. . . . Man accommodates himself much better than the other animals, despite physical, economic, and social upheavals. Such endurance is due to a very particular mode of activity of his tissues and humors. The body seems to mold itself on events. Instead of wearing out, it changes. Our organism always devises new means of meeting every new situation. And these means are such that they give us maximum duration. The physiological processes, which are the substratum of inner

time, always incline in the direction leading to the longest survival of the individual. This strange function, this watchful automatism, makes possible human existence with its specific characters. It is called adaptation. . . . Adaptation assumes innumerable forms. However, its aspects may be grouped into two categories, intra-organic and extra-organic. Intra-organic adaptation is responsible for the constancy of the organic medium and of the relations of the tissues and humors. It determines the correlation of the organs. It brings about the automatic repair of tissues and the cure of diseases. Extra-organic adaptation adjusts the individual to the physical, psychological, and economic work. It allows him to survive in spite of the unfavorable conditions of his environment. Under these aspects, the adaptive functions are at work during each instant of our whole life. They are the indispensable basis of our duration (46, 191ff.).

Carrel understands man's capacity for extra-organic adaptation to include the social environment as well as the physical, and to represent an essentially teleological device by which man can determine his own future. He says,

Adaptation is a mode of being of all organic and mental processes. It is not an entity. It is equivalent to the automatic grouping of our activities in such a manner as to assure the survival of the individual. It is essentially teleological. Owing to the adaptive activities, the organic medium remains constant, the body conserves its unity and recovers from diseases. It is for the same reason that we endure, in spite of the fragility and the transitory character of our tissues. Adaptation is as indispensable as nutrition. In fact, it is only an aspect of nutrition. However, in the organization of modern life, no account has ever been taken of such an important function. Its use has been almost completely given up. And this neglect has brought about a deterioration of the body and of the mind.

This mode of activity is necessary to the complete development of our being. Its deficiency determines the atrophy of the nutritive and mental functions from which it is not distinct. Adaptation causes the organic processes to move simultaneously according to the rhythms of physiological time and of the unforeseeable variations of the environment. Any change in the environment elicits a response of all physiological and mental processes. These movements of the functional systems express the apprehension by man of the outer reality. They act as a buffer for the material and psychological shocks which he increasingly receives. They not only permit him to endure, but they also are the agents of his formation and of his progress. They are endowed with a property of capital importance, the property of being easily modified by certain chemical, physical, and psychological factors, which we know well to handle. We can use these factors as tools, and thus successfully intervene in the development of human activities. In fact, the knowledge of the mechanisms of adaptation gives man the power of renovating and reconstructing himself (46, p. 233ff.).

From these extracts from Dr. Carrel's attempt to study man functionally in the light of knowledge from all of the major areas of the scientific study of man, it may be seen that the Association group is itself a factor in the environment of the Association member, and that it is in the nature of his being to employ such contacts and relationships toward his own ends. Such utilization tends, in effect, toward repetition of his own indicated behaviors, and toward strengthening and establishment of the group mode or pattern.

Of the main scientific disciplines and schools of thought that continue to contribute toward the understanding of the individual, the contributions from psychology reveal most about what he brings with him as instinct and capacity at birth, how he learns, and how his behavior with that of others—those who precede and follow him—go to make up the total civilization.

The learning processes stressed by educational psychology are essentially adaptive processes. Professor Thorndike and associates have formulated certain laws of learning (63, p. 70), which have been applied by many writers to educational procedures. These well-known Laws of Readiness, Exercise (Use and Disuse), and Effect (Satisfaction and Annoyance) have provided significant insight into the manner by which the individual, growingly conscious of identity, builds up from countless social interactions a habit structure that yields the unformed material of self-hood. When this self at length emerges through self-discipline and insistent social tuition as a unique personality, it is an uncompleted end-product of original and learned tendencies, and a resultant of continuous interaction along the way with every environmental element. Such interactions are the elements of adaptive process. Resulting habits are the elements of which institutional behavior is composed.

In contrast to the system that considered the S-R bond and "the reflex arc the basic mechanism of behavior and habit formation its goal," the Gestalt school of psychology, according to Professor Ogden (Readings, p. 765), conceived, with other groups, that stimulus (*S*) was probably never single or discreet, but part of a "formal pattern or configuration," which could not be "reduced to unilinear sequences of time." Moreover, it was held, such configurations frequently exhibited observable integration with reference to some desired goal and its fulfillment. The essential distinction between the two positions, for the purposes of the present study, lies chiefly in the more definitely telic (purposive) character of the configuration theory. Institutional forms always have some considerable degree of social acceptance, and thus may represent an important aspect in configurations affecting the conduct of any related individual.

Whichever position be accepted, habit, which is the basis of institutional behavior, represents continuous adaptation of the individual mechanism. Professor Dewey notes also that individual functions and

habits "are ways of using and incorporating the environment, in which the latter has its say as surely as the former." "All conduct," he says, "is interaction between the elements of human nature and the environment, natural and social. . . . Character is interpenetration of habits. If each habit existed in an insulated compartment and operated without affecting or being affected by others, character would not exist. . . . Since environments overlap, since situations are continuous and those remote from one another contain like elements, a continuous modification of habits by one another is constantly going on." (12, p. 10ff.)

On the basis of the foregoing discussion, from the standpoint of the individual it appears that the Association member, in readiness for activity based on existing interests, tends to repeat activity and to maintain affiliations that yield satisfaction. This satisfaction may lead to repetition and become habitual. The satisfaction may embrace others in group relationships, and represent important concomitant values in recognition, status, approval, prestige, and the like. As a result, attitudes are stimulated that tend to undergird such group relationships and to lead toward continuance. A constantly changing individual thus participates directly in building up and changing the institutional pattern; and, in turn, experiences adaptation himself because of it.

Since institutions are in fact only the learned behaviors of individuals, every activity in relation to an institutional observance involves the elements inherent in any other learning situation. Because institutional forms arise from repeated observance on the part of members (or devotees) who derive satisfaction from experience, and because such observance gains in authority and prestige as it becomes general, the individual is relatively powerless by himself to change the institutional pattern. A new *general* interest must arise similar to the established observance but strong enough to supersede or modify it in the concern of sufficient persons to be effective. Critical examination of an institution by the individual offers a possibility of fresh learning, aroused interest, and continued observance; or may even lead ultimately to some revision thereof.

Institutions also seem to develop rather from current voluntary responses confirmed in individual habit than from general concepts imposed upon conduct. Once so established, the relation of the immediate activity of any member to an almost super-personal institution may be expressed by types of conformity arising from self-interest, by indifference, or by resistance or revolt.

It appears, finally, that no institution is really identical for any two persons. There are sufficient common elements, however, to enable the institution to obtain observance from many individuals, or whole community, or an entire culture. When this occurs, the possible rôle of any one individual in institutional adaptation is relatively slight. Yet the process of adaptation itself remains essentially individual; for the individual himself must in some form experience and implement the change.

## II. ADAPTIVE PROCESS IN THE MEMBER GROUP

In the analysis of major institutional patterns in Chapter VI, it was natural that most of these, although a function of the individual member's experience, should pertain chiefly to the broader life of the Young Men's Christian Association as a great association. In one case, however, the application, though true in the broader sense, was more significant by far in its specific bearing within a single local Association and among the groups of members that typically compose it.

An organization sponsoring more than one hundred thousand of such groups each year requires to understand the processes by which the desirable outcomes intended may be secured from all of this activity. In her able study, *Social Process in Organized Groups*, Dr. Grace Coyle has fully described the interrelationship of the organized group with its social setting, the processes of group formation and evolution of structure, the relation of member and leader, and the means by which group feeling and *esprit de corps* are developed. She has examined the formation and activity of groups in terms of social psychology. In an era of declining neighborhood life in the cities, she has conceived the growth of organizations as "psychological neighborhoods of a specialized sort," which help the individual "within the more compassable limits of a face-to-face organization" to "regain his claims to uniqueness and consideration. . . . Collective action represents the return to power of the individual, but in a different form; and it is that recognition that has built many of our numerous powerful associations." (50, p. 11ff.)

The members who come into group relations in a Y.M.C.A. are obviously the social product of many diverse group experiences. Already they have been more or less successful in drawing from these experiences materials according to their own needs. Dr. Coyle contrasts the "kind of personal unity developed out of a society which embodied most of the aspects of life within one group" with that in which "interests became differentiated and find expression in various groups," wherein each person receives stimulus in a somewhat different setting, and becomes "a many-faceted personality whose unity if secured must be 'wrought into consistency' by the act of choice" (50, p. 11). These comments suggest one of the basic forms of group adaptive process by which the group becomes a part of the environment within which interaction is experienced.

Group members are thus constantly in process of adjustment, and the group itself, as a result, is constantly becoming something other than what it was. Attention here is directed not primarily to all of these intricate aspects of group experience, but only to those phases of that experience that represent the more established or institutional expressions. These relatively more permanent or recurrent features of the group's life support, if they are not indeed responsible for, its continuity. At the same time, they are somewhat more resistant to modification.

Association groups vary widely as to age. Their members bring differing degrees of social maturity. They become a part of one or more clubs, classes, teams, or special-interest groupings. The established pattern of each type of group becomes a frame of relationship in which the rôle of both member and leader tends to be clearly defined. The free activity of a special-interest grouping results in a free activity pattern often regarded as significant for the pursuit of such projects. The discipline and co-operation of a team group, playing under long-established rules with an official to administer them, become a part of the established tradition of such activity. The democratic practices of a well-adjusted club group with a large measure of self-government are usually readily accepted, and deviation is frequently regarded as inappropriate if not deserving of penalty.

Three categories of groups are offered by Slavson: *compulsory*, *motivated*, *voluntary*. The voluntary are by far the most typical of Association groups. They may of course take any of the above described forms (p. 243). Slavson further classifies the voluntary groups as: (1) the socially or culturally homogeneous group; (2) the activity or multi-activity group; (3) the special-interest group; and (4) the therapy group. He states that

Enlightened group workers find that most groups pass through stages in their existence that correspond fully or in part to the four types described, and that they employ multiple techniques and programs suitable to meet these varying needs. Thus among the members of a socially homogeneous group, special interest groups may evolve; common interests may draw small numbers of the constituency together for special occupations. A good leader will aim to transform the ordinary social club into an activity group on special occasions, at least, by stimulating creative expression and social participation. He will at all times be alert to problems that beset each member of his group, and seek to guide them toward a healthy resolution of psychological stress. (62, pp. 20-23)

That it may be possible for a leader so to modify the current aspect of a club group suggests diverse elements in the total group situation that may, under other conditions or leadership, become typical institutional features. Flexibility and adaptability itself may be preferred to fixity. In the face-to-face group, where interactions are more direct and immediate, and where the personality of the leader is also a direct factor, the possibility of ready modification is very great. When the face-to-face relationship yields to the more remote ties, modification in any concerted way becomes more difficult to achieve. Reliance must be placed upon relatively permanent and agreed-upon elements in the common relationship if there is to be any continuity at all.

It appears, then, that adaptive process is seen typically in the life of groups in such forms as the following:

*Change in Age and Number or Identity of Group Members*

An original group of boys of about the same age must necessarily grow older, as the club continues. Soon they will be a club composed of an older, maturer group of individuals. If the club be planned for a given age grouping, it will soon be obliged to change its program, its name, its rules, or all of these, if it is to remain intact as a grouping of the original persons, and successfully hold their interest. Yet these institutional forms may not be sufficiently flexible to permit ready adjustment. The group may outgrow their limitation upon what it prefers to do as a continuing but now older group. Furthermore, if new persons are to be admitted, the existing pattern that has been built up over perhaps a long period of time is altered, and new adjustments are involved. If the newcomer has prestige from other relationships that seem appropriate to group members, or other form of acceptability, the closed circle of membership may be easily modified. The devices of formal vote, initiation, insignia may be invoked to greater or lesser degree to exalt the institutional significance of the group. If much increase of numbers, or great change in personnel, takes place, it is at the cost of some factor of group stability that is akin to institutional quality.

*Change in Form of Group Organization*

The class pattern presents a teacher as leader, all others remaining on a common level except for differing degrees of ability or excellence. If group organization enters however, such as the election of officers, the adoption of rules or a constitution, this establishes a new form that acquires its own prestige. The same changes are noted if a class or activity group happens to adjust toward the club type. These various classifications represent descriptive terms for functional realities resting upon preferences and habits subject to change but not easily changed. (See definitions of types of groups based on structure, p. 243.) Thus, a council made up of persons representing several club groupings has greater permanence by reason of its representative character. Dr. Coyle, commenting on the evolution of structure in groups, says, "There comes to be an underlying agreement on many of the characteristics of the group which serves to define it not only to its members, but to those individuals with which it comes into contact. The purposes, major and minor, which it pursues, its policies of membership and on other aspects of its life, while never static, reach points of temporary equilibrium which become bases of action. Such relatively permanent relationships provide the structure in terms of which the more evanescent processes of group interaction are carried on." (50, p. 78) Structure is the more permanent aspect of group organization.

The question may arise as to whether this "temporary equilibrium" is structure, and whether it is essentially institutional in quality; and

also whether structure itself has a quasi-institutional aspect. Undoubtedly, in the field of group relations structure has essential institutional quality. The points of temporary equilibrium, when first reached, are only potentially institutional. When, thereafter, action is recurrently based upon them, they have become institutional in character. Dr. Coyle stresses their relatively permanent tendency.

#### *Change of the Group's Field of Activity or Program*

In other chapters it has been shown that Associations tended to make each aspect of the long-established fourfold emphasis an end in itself. Departments were organized. Specialized staffs were employed both by local Associations and for state or national service. Underlying these compartmented emphases—physical, educational, social, religious—were innumerable groups set in pursuit of these single aspects of a total life ideal. The limit of method and equipment was set as the goal was set, narrowly; so that the advent of the "all-around" group with its "fourfold purpose" was a distinct novelty introduced only after some groups and leaders had broken over the established distinctions. Special-interest and hobby groups which become ordinary club groups represent a similar adjustment. When such adjustments are in process, some factor serves to delimit the area within which adjustments are desired. These represent new factors that help to redefine the approved or appropriate scope of the revised field of activity. Dr. Coyle observes that interests are given a recognized order of importance accepted by the group, but that these are never maintained in a static condition. Pressures from inside for a change of policy result from complex factors having their roots in continuous changes in the personality of members, varied content and strength of members' interests from meeting to meeting, the rise of genuinely new interests and next-stop activities (50, pp. 52-54). These latter may have definitely instrumental or telic character. All of these serve to keep the field of group expression in flux, despite what appear to be relatively fixed forms of organization and modes of expression.

#### *Change of Group Status, Recognition, Affiliation, etc.*

Status and recognition are earned values hardly to be secured overnight. Groups require a certain amount of time to win approval for whatever values they may have. With this essential time-span emerge other characteristics than duration as such that are closely associated with it. Duration may, of itself, lead to prestige; but usually such prestige rests upon values associated with identifiable group activity.

The device of registering all groupings sponsored by some Associations dignifies their purposes. It also recognizes their program as appropriate to be sponsored before the public, worthy of aiding through leadership, and probable of continuance for a considerable period of time. The emergence of a loosely organized number of interested young

men into a Young Men's Council or a Junior Board represents the acceptance of certain established form or structures as well as increased recognition. The recognition by school authorities of a Hi-Y Club as a logical and useful part of school life enhances the club's conception of itself, while it also may add an expectancy of permanence (64).

When and if such groups seek and secure formal affiliation with other similar groups in other communities, a new and significant step is taken toward institutional expression. From this step, retreat cannot be made without some loss of prestige. Thus another institutional feature is made evident. A purely local club of high-school boys may enjoy their relationship and whatever prestige they have had; but recognition by national charter as a registered Hi-Y chapter is akin to the process by which local college groups attain national fraternal recognition. Dr. Coyle comments: "In every case where a group is related to another either by including it, being within it, or federated with it, the jurisdiction of each has to be defined in terms of mutual responsibility and control." (50, p. 102) There can be little doubt however, of the advantages of such affiliation. Many gang groups have won new standing by such affiliation. They have also assumed new responsibility.

#### *Relation of Group Leadership*

In the classification of groupings previously discussed, the rôle of the leader was seen to differ as between the club and the class. In the personality of the leader, over a period of time, the group has one of the strongest institutional elements. He is presumably committed, by group ideals and recognition, to a type of relationship that enhances the personalities of group members. He makes his contribution instrumental to their development. He supplies balance during the reconciliation of divergent interests in the group. He guides their consideration along lines of mutual forbearance and respect. He promotes team play. He is judge and arbiter, counselor and friend, mature among the youthful and immature, assigned if not actually employed, and in any case responsible. Because of these realistic relationships, it becomes easy for him to institutionalize himself. By this is meant that he so establishes himself in the experience of the group that he is essential to it at every point and step, that his views are the foundation of every group deliberation, and that his leadership is really imposed upon that which the group might build up from its own resources. With his ascendancy follows their dependence.

Or, he may also function as a counselor and teacher, winning a relationship essentially parental in character. Professional workers in particular, when serving as club leaders are likely to find it difficult to achieve a position of objective sympathy, that is to say, to function fruitfully within the institutional pattern without being emotionally bound by it.

*The Managing Board*

If one turns from the preceding areas of adaptation in the typical member group to the managing or board group, the essential character of the relationship does not change though their institutional aspects are likely to be heightened. The function of management signifies processes of appointment or representative choice that are themselves an institutional procedure designed to safeguard against irresponsible decisions of policy and other changes. Older persons are frequently so chosen. Tenures are often unlimited or recurrent. Competent replacements are difficult to find or to elect. The conservative temper rules. Prerogatives, especially regarding policy-making and budget, are cherished. Structures only rarely provide for the emergence of ideas from sponsored groups. The patterns of control have already been described (p. 179). In general, the weight of institutionalism bears most heavily in the area of policy, and manifests itself most concretely around the function of control. It will be necessary later on, to examine what, if anything, may be done to stimulate wholesome adaptive process in that relationship.

In these somewhat typical areas of institutional manifestation in the member group may be seen the essential manner in which individual personalities, through the interactions of group experience, are developed into participants in the affairs of wider associations, with their established institutional tendencies. It will be clear that, although the essential nature of the processes of institutional development is probably the same at all levels, the relative permanence of their particular expression appears greater as they become more remote from the direct participation of the local member and his direct interests.

### III. ADAPTIVE PROCESS IN THE ASSOCIATION AND ITS INSTITUTIONS

The social nature of institutions has long been appreciated. Until recently, social analysis as understood by the sociologist has been the prevailing approach to the study of institutions. Latterly, the insights of psychology have also been utilized, particularly by the social psychologist. The psychologist has long been chiefly occupied with the study of the individual, and less concerned with his behavior in groups and associations. In recent years, however, with the application of psychology and sociology to the problems of education, the profound influence of existing institutions upon social conduct has come into sharp review. Modern philosophy of education feels obliged to concern itself with the total organization of society and the processes, individual and social, by which progressive citizenship may be developed. With a growing recognition of the active rôle of education in social change, the possibility of timely modification of social institutions has also received much attention. It is important to understand how far adaptive processes are implicit in the nature of social institutions, and to what

degree it may be possible to secure desirable institutional change through educational processes.

The fact of adaptation was clearly apparent in the study of Association patterns in the preceding chapter. Here the question is, What adaptive processes are inherent in such patterns, and how, if it be possible at all, can these processes be directed toward desired ends?

A brief review of the major patterns identified for study will be useful at this point:

#### *Constituency*

Once exclusively male, but latterly including both sexes; typically young but broadening in age range through earlier affiliation and the operation of survivorship; non-resident in emphasis, but becoming localized; almost exclusively Protestant in religious affiliation but becoming more tolerant of other groups and legalizing their affiliation; embracing chiefly white-collar workers in cities, but claiming a mission to all classes.

#### *Aims*

Long conceived as purely individual, narrowly evangelistic, seeking personal commitment or conversion according to current Protestant conceptions of salvation; but broadening to include general social objectives and a broader field of expression in line with the whole range of life interests.

#### *Program*

Broadening from purely evangelistic methods with individuals to an approach built upon a fourfold conception of personality, and later to a more unified conception stressing all interests as areas for program activity leading to both individual and social outcomes.

#### *Local Organization*

Voluntary fellowships of young men based upon common needs and interests—fellowships that tend to lose their sense of cohesion and identity of concern with increased size, complexity, and age range.

#### *National Affiliation*

Locally autonomous societies at first somewhat reluctantly convening for inspirational purposes, but presently creating and extending a complex structure of relationships, activities, controls requiring continual readjustment to maintain structural harmony and unity of effort.

#### *Buildings*

Novel service facilities provided by subscription for program uses under changing program emphases, which required recurrent modification of equipment more rapidly than costly replacements and exten-

sions could be provided, thus retarding or distorting timely program evolution, and delimiting the constituency covered.

#### *Finance*

Supported originally by the membership itself, requiring supplementation from community and corporation donors as programs became diversified and buildings more costly, with resulting membership rates and service charges that tended to identify the constituency as a distinct economic group and to negate the claim of "a mission to all classes."

#### *Leadership*

Early predominance of lay members in initiative and control, later threatened and to such degree reversed by the salaried workers as to require constitutional determination of proportionate voice in the national legislative body and redefinition of the functions of lay and professional worker.

#### *Community Relations*

Typically a pioneer, local, independent, private, voluntary society, approaching the community directly for constituency and support, but becoming increasingly aware of other legitimate approaches to the same constituency and the validity of inter-agency co-operation in planning and financing the work and in defining common standards.

#### *Protestant Identification*

Chiefly identified with the historic stream of Protestant religious thought in America in outlook, aims, and methods of work; but regarding kindly the broader basis of relationship to all Christians and the need for working co-operation with those of all faiths.

#### *Social Policy*

Earlier highly individualistic patterns identified with helping young men to espouse Christian principles and "make good" have been broadened to include social systems conditioning individual character and outlook, and co-operation with other agencies of educational, social, and religious purpose upon certain specific programs of education and action.

Causal analysis of the intricate and often obscure factors composing the elements of these changing patterns would no doubt prove rewarding if it were feasible. Methods of committee activity would profit greatly if a detailed tracing of the functioning of a particular committee in the evolution and ascendancy of a particular idea were accurately known. The true evaluation of the part some particular individual may have had would helpfully illuminate many episodes in the life of group and Association. These aspects are far too numerous and

often too subtle to allow specific current analysis, and their recovery from the long past is entirely out of the question. Instead, these changing patterns have been scrutinized for elements that may help to reveal the nature and locus of adaptation and may suggest to some degree the modes of control appropriate to them. From this scrutiny the following observations are derived:

- (a) No institutional pattern ever really remained static. Adaptive process appears to be inherent in each pattern, being identified with persons, in the first instance, and with their group relationships, secondarily, and in each case inevitably subject to modification with each new experience.
- (b) Time itself has been a correlate of institutional manifestation, since time was required for any mode of thought and action to become established among persons composing any group or to be used for reference and guidance in subsequent activities.
- (c) Imitation was a readier method of individual reaction than innovation. Natural spreading power of member enthusiasm could be counted upon to lead rather toward extension of a group relationship than to its termination. The novel conception of young men's voluntary group organization was one that spread rapidly. The assumption that it was a form of relationship suited to all constituencies met with sufficient response to result in marked extension of Associations and membership—one so vigorous and persistent as to withstand substantial depletion from many badly-led centers and from transient member relations.
- (d) Contrast between legal process, based upon formal rules, and activity process, based upon changing interest among members and potential members, constituted a major aspect of the Association's ability and readiness to change its customary modes of action. Legal provisions, although often broad of definition, tended to be restrictive upon the freer range of interests and upon the participation of some having such interests. Modification was more prompt and broader in scope in relation to activities. Such modification sometimes contributed to later legal modification, both in small groups and in the Association itself.
- (e) Pressures from without have played a substantial part in determining modifications as well as pressures from within. Other group relationships represented by members reflected typical elements of the economic, social, political, and religious life of the community; and exerted definitive influence upon these members' contribution in group and Association. Sometimes more formal expressions were given, as by Protestant church bodies for example, which were regarded significantly by Association bodies at all levels. Military, political, industrial pressures were in evidence at various times also. Associations did not live apart from the active forces of the community, but

embodied them as their members embodied them, and brought them into efforts in which their own contribution as a youthful Association became a cohesive and sometimes polarizing element.

- (f) Once they were established as independent groupings, the Associations found themselves enjoying formalized "relationships" with many other organized community associations, the churches, etc. (60) One discernible adaptive process was the clear tendency to conform to standards and practices understood to be characteristic of similar groupings in the community or elsewhere. Constitutions, rooms, meetings were all symbolic of modes of formal organization to be found among other organizations as well as among Y.M.C.A.'s. Pressures both to imitate and to seek distinctiveness resulted in efforts along both lines.
- (g) Aims had both a personal and an organizational connotation, the former reflecting the ideologies of the times, the latter the stage of agreement regarding method and implementation reached. Disparity between aims held, aims formulated, and their implementation increased as the distance from initial face-to-face groups grew. Modification of small-group aims might be promptly accomplished; modification of the aims of the total Association Movement could hardly be proposed, let alone achieved, short of elaborate processes of formulation, documentation, discussion, and legislation, which usually required considerable time and which often resulted in compromise or in a solution remote or belated.
- (h) Adaptation occurred at all levels of Association relationship—that is, in the member, the member group, the local organization, and the broader Association—and rates of adaptation differed at these levels. Individual conviction, group consensus, local Association consensus or consent, and general Association decisions of policy were often far removed in the content, in articulation through established procedures, and in concertedness. How such differing rates and objectives may be reconciled significantly in the complex life of a great association is admirably illustrated in the actions of recent national conventions of the Y.W.C.A. on "Guiding Principles and Emphases." (74)
- (i) Institutional tendency was closely identified with safeguards placed about the control of policy, at all levels. It might be said to represent the weighting of all directional decisions on the side of existing policy. Much of what an Association might include in its accepted round of activity could be left to the free play of individual interest and expression; but decisions of policy must be carefully protected from unusual or sudden modification.

The preceding observations require criticism in the light of broader

studies of social institutionalism. Such studies should help to clarify the real nature of institutionalism and perhaps to identify those elements more subject to modification.

In approaching the present study, the writer tentatively accepted the point of view of MacIver regarding the nature of social institutions. His definitions were used in reviewing the history of the Young Men's Christian Association for the purpose of identifying typical institutional elements. It now becomes necessary to examine the MacIver definitions more critically. He says,

By a *group*, we mean any collection of social beings who enter into distinctive social relationships with one another. . . . A group involves reciprocity between its members.

An *association* is a group specifically organized for the pursuit of an interest or group of interests in common. . . . It is not the community, but an organization within the community. . . . Because an association is organized for particular purposes, we belong to it only by virtue of these purposes. . . . We are born into communities, but we create or are elected into associations. . . . All other associations [than the state] in a modern society, at least, are voluntary. . . . Though an association has in truth no purposes that are not the purposes of some or all of its members, it has methods of operation peculiar to it as an association.

By *institutions* [we mean] the established forms or conditions of procedure characteristic of group activity. . . . Every association has, in respect of its particular interest, its characteristic institutions. . . . We cannot belong to an institution. (22, pp. 11-14)

The question arises as to whether these definitions have enough support to warrant their use as a basis for necessary understanding of the nature of institutions and the possibility of guiding their adaptation toward desired ends. To aid in answering this inquiry the contributions of four additional writers have been examined.

An attempt to find a definition of institutions common to representatives of various scientific fields was not wholly successful. Such an attempt was made by J. O. Hertzler in his study, *Social Institutions* (18), in which he sought to bring together the key items emphasized by various authors in their more complete definitions. Hertzler produced the following unusual composite definition:

Institutions are

1. "Ways in which a people behave or act," "apparatus of social life," "modes or organs," "forms of order," "systems of action";
2. "Well-adapted" for fulfilling socially necessary or desirable ends ("deliberately approved ends"), or for carrying on "some particular function" in the community as a whole or some special part of it;
3. Taking the form of "usages (or complexes thereof) governing

certain social relations of men," or "organized forms of social activity," or "systems of relationship," "groupings," "sets of activities"; or, if social-psychologically expressed, taking the form of "definite and established phases of the public mind," or "status of mind";

4. Made "relatively permanent and formal," "recognized and established," "sanctioned," "systematized," "prized, defended, perpetuated, and if need be enforced";
5. "By the authority of communities," or "by some common will," or "by groups," or "by society";
6. And concretely expressed in "social habits," "overt activities" and "similar and reciprocal habits of individual behavior."

From this composite definition, which nevertheless reflects somewhat clearly the general conception of social institution, after applying certain criteria, Hertzler develops the following summary definition:

A social institution is a complex of concepts and attitudes regarding the ordering of a particular class of unavoidable or indispensable human relationships that are involved in satisfying certain elemental individual wants, certain compelling social needs, or other eminently desirable social ends. The concepts and attitudes are condensed into modes, customs, traditions and codes. Individually, the institution takes the form of habits approved and conditioned in the individual by the group; socially it is a structure evidencing itself in standardized and ordered relationships and often finding additional functional effectiveness through associations, organizations, and physical extensions. Every operative and controlling activity of a given society takes place through institutions. Hence, every great field of social life has its collection of institutions, ranging from those which satisfy vital and permanent needs to those relatively superficial and transitory. (18, p. 67ff.)

It was vigorously argued by Prof. F. H. Allport, among other students, that persons are the central aspect of institutions, and that violence is done to the facts of the case by considering institutions as anything significant otherwise. Says Allport:

To a disinterested investigator only individuals are significant; the institution is merely their manner of functioning. To an administrator who is interested not only in individuals but in "results," the abstract institution is sometimes likely to seem the more real and important. [Allport even charges an unworthy motive in this regard. Says he:] When, however, we wish not merely to describe, but to control human action, when we seek to arouse feeling or effort toward some *ulterior* end, the institution then becomes for us the reality, while individuals fade into the background. . . . Human emotions, self-elation, leadership, convenience, the necessity for concerted action, and the aims of officials—all these and many other considerations enter into our thinking and acting to

encourage the belief that institutions exist above the heads of men and women. . . . The urge to believe that an institution is something independent of individuals cannot easily be quelled. It springs from divers courses: from enthusiasm, loyalty, self-esteem, the impulse to control, and eagerness of social students to find a convenient, easy, and at the same time, respectable terminology. [Allport rightly scores the attempt frequently made to describe the nature of institution by means of analogy. He considers that attempts to describe the *functions* of institutional activity are more successful than the attempt to define them as independent social phenomena.] From all these failures there emerges a challenging conclusion: an institution, perhaps, is not a substantive thing at all. It is not a term by which we denote something in the same category with the natural objects about us; it is a term by which we do no more than record our observation that individuals are living and working together in certain ways. It is not a tangible thing, but a conceptual relationship of things. (3, pp. 10-12)

The problem of the real nature and composition of social institutions has been discussed with discernment by John Dewey. He states,

We often fancy that institutions, social customs, collective habit, have been formed by the consolidation of individuals' habits. In the main, this supposition is false as to fact. To a considerable extent customs, or wide-spread uniformities of habit, exist because individuals face the same situation and react in the same fashion. But to a larger extent customs persist because individuals form their personal habits under conditions set by prior customs. . . . The activities of the group are already there, and some assimilation of his own acts to their pattern is a prerequisite of a share therein, and hence of having any part in what is going on. . . . The nature of habit is to be assertive, insistent, self-perpetuating. . . . Some pre-existent association of human beings is prior to every particular human being who is born into the world. . . . These associations are definite modes of interaction of persons with one another; that is to say they form customs, institutions. . . . The problem of how those established and more or less deeply grooved systems of interaction which we call social groups, big and small, modify the activities of individuals who performe are caught up within them, and how the activities of individuals remake and redirect previously established customs is a deeply significant one. . . . The problem of social psychology is not how either individual or collective mind forms social groups and customs, but how different customs, established interacting arrangements, form and nurture different minds. (12, pp. 58-63)

Such a view of the influence of grouped habits upon the individual appears to suggest increased difficulty in seeking to modify the existent character of a social institution. Dewey further observes:

A social revolution may effect abrupt and deep alterations in ex-

ternal customs, in legal and political institutions. But the habits that are behind these institutions and that have, willy-nilly, been shaped by objective conditions, the habits of thought and feeling, are not so easily modified. They persist and insensibly assimilate themselves to the outer innovations. . . . The force of lag in human life is enormous. Actual social change is never so great as is apparent change. Ways of belief, of expectation, of judgment and attendant emotional dispositions of like and dislike, are not easily modified after they have once taken shape. Political and legal institutions may be altered, even abolished; but the bulk of popular thought which has been shaped to their pattern persists. . . . Habits of thought outlive modifications in habits of overt action.

In seeking to make a more concrete analytical approach to the study of institutions, Dr. Stuart Chapin took account of two groups of institutions:

1. The general social institutions diffused over a wider-flung area and more symbolic in character; and
2. The more specific or nucleated institutions, such as local government, family, school, church, welfare agencies.

Dr. Chapin noted in these latter "the existence of a cultural nucleus or core complex. This nucleus is attached to a restricted locus through the agency of another type of social institution, which, he asserted, "is always a part of the nucleated social institution": property. Pursuing this analysis further, he found that

the structure of a social institution consists in the combination of certain related type parts into a configuration possessing the properties of relative rigidity and relative persistence of form, and tending to function as a unit on a field of contemporary culture. The four main type parts that combine to produce the configuration or cultural concretion known as the social institution are:

1. Common reciprocating attitudes of individuals and their conventionalized behavior patterns.
2. Cultural objects of symbolic value: that is, objects charged with sentimental meaning to which human behavior has been conditioned.
3. Objects possessing utilitarian value: that is, material objects that satisfy creature wants and through conditioned response and habit attach the other parts of the pattern to a specific location: objects called property.
4. Oral or written language symbols that preserve the descriptions and specifications of the patterns of interrelationship among the other three parts—attitudes, symbolic culture traits, and utilitarian culture traits or real property. (9, p. 15)

Dr. Chapin's analytic technique for the study of political and social institutions sought also to build up, by a clever juxtaposition and overlapping of spatial patterns, the concept of a "single plurality pattern" representing segments of behavior of a number of persons integrated into a configuration locally recognized as an established association. This new configuration around, let us say, political attitudes or segments of behavior, was actually composed of several different persons, each of whom lived in a social setting including other group interests, occupational, religious, political, etc. This graphic method illustrates the diverse capacities of individuals, which, in these novel inter-personal relations, create a new identifiable nucleus without obliterating their own identity. The social context, according to Chapin, is thus a fabric of such interwoven relationships with each person differentiated both by his intrinsic attributes, and by participation in, or identification with, many such nucleated patterns.

There is, of course, much common ground among these studies. Each contributes something unique and of value. The Hertzler quest for a unified conception of institution upon which the separate scientific disciplines might agree was not successful, but it did yield a series of concepts that defined with substantial clarity the social context in which this manifestation, at once individual and social, occurs. The contribution was not materially at variance with the conception of MacIver, though it appeared to allow a less prominent place than the latter to group relations in the formation and maintenance of institutional behaviors.

The contribution of Allport appeared so to stress the individuals who are at any time a part of the institutional behavior that he gave but negligible emphasis to the potency and persistency of institutional forms. If institution, after all, is "not a tangible thing, but a conceptual relationship of things," one may be perplexed to understand how institutional influence persists from one generation to another, one culture to another, and beyond the most profound social and economic upheavals.

At this point the quotations from Dewey were helpful, since he has described the potency of group habit foundations, which, when shaped by objective conditions, tend to persist longer than their institutional expressions, and to support recurrent or similar manifestations later on.

The points emphasized by Allport and Dewey do not negate at any point the accepted definition by MacIver, but rather support and amplify it in certain respects.

The Chapin analysis does not question the MacIver definition in any way; but offers a type of analysis that usefully supplements MacIver's classifications. The possibility of distinguishing between the attitude components of institutional behavior, symbolic objects, utilitarian features and coded symbols and specifications seems particularly intriguing as a method of analyzing an association that Chapin would undoubtedly designate as a specific or nucleated institution.

Chapin's concept of the nucleated social institution, with its four type parts, was illustrated by the following analysis of four major institutions. To this the present author has added a fifth column relating to the Y.M.C.A., introducing a related discussion.

TABLE XXXVI  
NUCLEATED SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS  
(Adapted from F. Stuart Chapin)\*

FOUR TYPE PARTS	FAMILY	CHURCH	GOVERNMENT	BUSINESS	Y.M.C.A.
I. Attitudes and behavior patterns	Affection Love Loyalty Respect	Reverence Loyalty Fear Devotion	Subordination Co-operativeness Fear Obedience	Workmanship Thrift Co-operation Loyalty	Co-operation Lay activity Group method Religious aims
II. Symbolic culture traits, "symbols"	Marriage ring Crest Coat of Arms Heirloom	Cross Ikon Shrine Altar	Flag Seal Emblem Anthem	Trade-mark Patent sign Emblem	Triangle emblem Y.M.C.A.
III. Utilitarian culture traits (real property)	Home Dwelling Furniture	Church edifice Cathedral Temple	Public buildings Public works	Shop Store Factory Office	Y.M.C.A. building Camp Work locus
IV. Code of oral or written specifications	Marriage license Will Genealogy <i>Mores</i>	Creed Doctrine Bible Hymn	Charter Constitution Treaties Ordinances	Contracts Licenses Franchises Articles of incorporation	Membership affiliation and regulation Constitution Official Roster of Associations and secretaries

\*9, p. 16.

If the assumptions behind the Chapin analysis may be relied upon, it would appear that the four "type parts" afford at least one tangible means of examining the problem of adaptation in the Y.M.C.A.

### 1. *Attitudes and Behavior Patterns in the Y.M.C.A.*

The genius of the Y.M.C.A. lies in association. Such association arises from the need of individuals for attention, shared effort, affection, response, recognition—needs that are elementary and insistent, and that continue to operate beyond the original family circle and immediate environment. Though the Y.M.C.A. is in a real sense a personal membership organization, it capitalizes upon this type of attitude and its concomitant associative behavior. The characteristic use of group method in program activity follows naturally from the significance of this psychological type part in Y.M.C.A. institutional structure. Individuals disposed to associative expression and representing other like and common interests or needs readily form congenial and co-operative groupings even when they do not come at first as part of a group already organized.

Such persons are in fact the typical *laymen*, that is affiliated in a purely volunteer relationship, uncompensated financially, who themselves become both the participants in and directors of their own activity to a substantial degree. Broadly considered, the concern with reli-

gion, shared unevenly to be sure among these individuals, is implicit in much of what is done, and is both emphatic and explicit in some parts of it. This *co-operation of lay groups toward purposes leading to the attainment of direct and indirect religious values and closely related aims represents the typical Y.M.C.A. behavior pattern.*

How does this pattern express itself and adapt itself? The related patterns are necessarily complex. Diversity of group interests is reflected in varied programs, which, if recognized at all, must be comprehended under a broad philosophy of purpose and often rationalized in line therewith. The distinction between aims avowed, implicit, emergent, or kept in reserve, leads to disparity if not actual inconsistency between these, and degrees of modification toward or away from officially recognized aims. The rising of one or another special interest to prominence, such as citizenship, crime prevention, represents a sense of concern or obligation among some individuals or groups that may lead to self-activity of a direct sort, or to a demand for group or organization activity on a larger scale. Here modification of attitudes and behavior patterns starts with individuals; includes other individuals; suggests, then possibly results in, group concern and action; and perhaps ends in some appropriate form of policy action. In this sequence the psychological problem involved in what has been called the departmental emphasis, and the fourfold program, which so long dominated total Y.M.C.A. behavior will be understood. These group interests were not only overtly expressed, but through such expression became firmly established in habit patterns which, as forms of institutional expression, tended long to persist. Modification of such forms, involving adjustment of behaviors resting on fundamental and long-recognized interests and habits, could only to a degree be achieved through the introduction of new interests or combinations of interests that could win support.

When the new group interests, as defined above, are proposed as matters of policy within a sponsored group or for the whole Association, the existent structure may or may not provide a ready channel for making the proposal known and understood. In the Y.M.C.A. it has been unusual for a definite organ of conference and reference to exist, excepting through such instances as the controlling board of a branch in larger cities in its relation to the city-wide board, the department committees of local branches and associations, and certain local councils made up of representatives of organized groupings.

Even in such groupings, it is very common that members of staff assume representative or interpretive rôles on behalf of member groups. Because of the difficulty involved in articulating group expression adequately in matters of policy, the staff may assume a function so frequently (and perhaps so efficiently) that it is again and again relied upon and so institutionalized. Desirable modification of present practice at this point would need to be accomplished through restraint at the point where the staff tend to supersede lay group expression, and through

a studied effort to redefine the staff rôle in terms of enhancing and releasing interest and responsible expression by laymen, young as well as old.

Because of delays, lags, or outright divergence of view (as in the clash of some new group proposal with an existing policy) it is likely that practice may at certain points even run ahead of admitted policy. It may occasionally even require curbing—a usually unwelcome necessity. The provision of free channels of group expression toward policy making by freshly appointed direct representatives would seem to provide the best prospect for strong articulation of sub-groups in the total behavior pattern of the organization. This is the complete antithesis of authoritarian doctrine. It represents, from the standpoint of leadership, the principle enunciated by Mary Follett as "power-with" instead of "power-over" those associated. (55, p. 187)

These patterns apply both to local organizations and to the multiple structure of the great association as seen in the Y.M.C.A. Movement as a whole. In terms of supervision as related to the latter, the modification away from authoritarian assumptions has been marked. Co-operative behavior patterns have been extolled, though their full expression in local and general organization lies some distance ahead.

## 2. *Symbolic Culture Traits (Symbols) in the Y.M.C.A.*

In the Y.M.C.A. perhaps the triangle best represents the use of symbol to represent the prevailing conception of the organization. The beauty and symmetry of the equilateral triangle were conceived as signifying appropriately spirit, mind, body. The creator of the symbol conceived these (about 1886) as a unity, but the full appreciation of what was involved in the unity of personality had yet to be realized. Competing with the triangle for acceptance were first the square, representing the "four-square" emphasis upon physical, intellectual, social, and religious aspects of both Association purpose and program; and later the circle, representing the concept of "all-round" personality. Although each of these symbols, like the triangle, had elements of truth in them, the square in particular lent itself to separation of organizational emphasis and to the heightening of fractional departmental thinking and activity. Neither the square nor the circle achieved the overt symbolic significance of the triangle. Yet each of these symbols exerted undeniable influence toward the comprehensive conception of character and of the Y.M.C.A. itself that came to be entertained by members, staff, boards, and committees, and the general public. Though of less vogue than formerly, the basic ideologies so symbolized remain somewhat potent and seem likely to change slowly in the future. The more modern emphasis upon the person himself, as contrasted with his supposed component parts, has perhaps tended to supersede the use of symbols, geometric or verbal.

Similarly, the alphabetical designation "Y.M.C.A." has itself achieved symbolic use. In many foreign lands these English letters have been pronounced and used as a single word denoting the organization as a whole. In this country the initial letters are more widely used today than are the actual words of the legal title, and have become symbolic of its buildings, attitudes, and purposes.

### *3. Utilitarian Culture Traits in the Y.M.C.A.*

Undoubtedly the Association buildings have played a profound part in concreting the thinking of the Y.M.C.A. about itself and of the public about the Y.M.C.A. In this fact may be found ample evidence of the Chapin thesis concerning the effect of "property" in the formation of the nucleated social institution. The building has exerted at least a two-fold effect upon the members and participants. It has offered activities of a type possible to provide only in central facilities. The provision of these offerings has led, through the necessity for staffing, supervision, economic operation, etc., to great concentration of effort on these services; and has tended to institutionalize all of these related functions. In general, the building and its manifold services have come in their entirety to be denoted as an institutional counterpart of the reality that is the Association itself.

A second effect of the building influence relates to the very limited range of its membership drawing power. In repeated surveys (5 and 127) it has been found that over half of the membership were drawn from a radius of one mile or less. The remainder of the residence community was likely to be relatively untouched until some local expression of the Y.M.C.A. arose not closely identified with building activity. The neighborhood-centered boys' activity groups represent such a tendency. In these instances leadership resources are placed at the disposal of clubs in the midst of their social school or work relationships, and programs develop out of resources there available. The development of non-equipment or "community" branches in certain cities represents the same principle of decentralized, localized programs, though accompanied by the usual branch structure and patterns of administration. The establishment of branch associations in larger cities again represented the same principle, but this was usually accompanied by both the branch organization pattern and the building program pattern, and thus reproduced the typically institutionalism of the usual city association structure. The Hi-Y movement, and the typical county organization, represented indigenous expression without property institutionalism as such. The property locus is so deeply established however in the habit patterns of most Y.M.C.A. members and leaders that possibly it may never be substantially modified. It is conceivable that it will remain *typically* much as at present, but *relatively* diminish in significance as non-property expressions gain greater ascendancy in certain areas and

greater representative voice in policy determinations of local and general organizations.

In the foregoing discussion of the property factor, the reference is primarily to the visualized element, and the building center as the locus and conditioner of activity, rather than to its financial value, or to the aggregate vested value represented by building and other assets, large as these are, and influential in themselves as institutional elements in shaping organizational policy and program development.

#### *4. Codes of Oral and Written Specifications in the Y.M.C.A.*

The Y.M.C.A. had developed in its eighty-eight years of formal existence in this country a number of formal specifications that have achieved the quality of "codes" if not of laws.

Among these "codes" were certain ones having legal status in terms of recognition by state governments. Incorporation, and formal charter, became a common practice, under state laws, with the usual responsibilities and rights, e.g., to hold property. Y.M.C.A.'s have been considered tax-exempt, for the most part, although action in recent years in various states has tended to question this exemption on the ground that Association buildings offered residence, restaurant, and other features to the general public in competition with commercial agencies offering similar services. The status of Y.M.C.A.'s as non-profit agencies has been defended on the basis that income from such services is used to balance the cost of services offered below cost to certain groups in the membership. The outcome of several court actions of recent years leaves ultimate classification in some doubt. Other charitable, religious, educational, literary, and scientific organizations are likewise concerned with their legal standing before the national community. They maintain services believed to be in the social interest, which would necessarily be curtailed if general taxation were to be applied. The outcome may be such as to require new definitions of voluntary agencies in respect of legal (that is, total community) control. Such control by the public, through the state, whether by taxation or by any other form of pressure, is greatly feared by hitherto private voluntary agencies in the fields listed above. Equally do many of them fear the state or municipality as competitor in offering to the whole population services hitherto offered chiefly by firmly institutionalized agencies to selected and partial constituencies. The need of increased revenues by government at all levels, under depression conditions, combined with accepted responsibility for providing certain services previously left chiefly to private responsibility, seems to be forcing swiftly forward the need of realignment of both public and private functions performed in relation of the general welfare. As in defense and safety, in formal education, and health, so latterly in terms of social security, informal education, employment, credit, youth opportunity, and many other fields the established private

agency rôle may be slowly but certainly modified. No discussion of recent times has so persistently held its place in public interest as the effort to redefine the distinctive field of private voluntary agencies. As one of these, believing profoundly in the permanent significance of associative effort, the Y.M.C.A. is deeply interested. Many assume superficially that such interest is primarily selfish, and related to survival. The true elements lie much deeper: in the character of the individuals holding membership; in the significance of association; in the considerable resources available; and in the social validity of interests and purposes espoused.

Within the Y.M.C.A. itself, also, codes have been established whose regulative significance derives from the democratic quality of the authority they represent. Such expressions, in the quasi-legal form of codes, are never as complete in catching up the desires and genius of sub-groups, or so adequate in their representative authority as might be desired. Yet they represent a pattern of institutionalism that allows for and even courts fully-shared processes.

Among many of these formulations, may be listed the following as of largest significance for the Y.M.C.A. as a whole:

- (a) The Constitution of the National Council. (See general description on p. 147.)
- (b) The regulations concerning local membership and the Association's purpose, both included in the Constitution, but each having specialized value as providing normative guidance at the specific points of member affiliation and local organization control. (See p. 158.)
- (c) The Official Roster of Associations, and the corresponding Roster or register of recognized professional workers, providing under stated qualifications the basis for organization recognition and standing, as well as a means of unifying and to some extent upgrading the total enterprise.

Similar to these, yet involving a novel and significant feature was the adoption by the National Council in 1933, among other "qualifications" of Member-Associations, a statement or standard of "minimum responsibility for financial support of the National Council," as follows:

1. That beginning with January 1st, 1934, the National Board be instructed to list as member Associations of the National Council only those Associations which have carried their reasonable share of the contribution budget of the National Council for the preceding year. (June, 1933.)
2. That the minimum responsibility of each member Association for its share of the annual contribution requirements of the National Council (in accordance with Article I, Section 1 (4) of the Constitution of the National Council) be established at 1 per cent of its income, which shall include income from contributions, membership fees and dues, endowments, dormitories

and the net income from all other sources, less taxes and interest on indebtedness.

3. That the following basis of listing member Associations in the Official Roster be approved:

"That the National Board approve for listing in the 1938 roster of member Associations those Associations which in 1937 paid 1 per cent or more of their income to the budget of the National Council in accordance with the approved formula.

"That those Associations which paid an amount in 1937 less than the 1 per cent minimum requirement be approved for listing without filing a request for exemption, provided they give adequate assurance of paying to the National Council during 1938 an amount equal to the minimum requirement adopted by the National Council.

"That Associations other than the foregoing should file request for exemption on account of failure to meet the minimum requirement for 1937 support, and that such requests be supported by official action of their Board of Directors and an adequate statement of their financial operations and conditions."

4. That in considering the request of any member Association for release from the foregoing provisions (in accordance with Article I, Section 1 (4) of the Constitution), the Membership Committee give weight to the increase of support indicated by such Associations over the previous year. (1936, p. 12)

In certain states similar action had antedated this national enactment. In some states, and especially in most of the six newly formed geographical "areas," the same device was applied jointly. This feature had a threefold significance:

1. It gauged the resources of the national agency on the basis of local operations of member Associations.
2. It assured to local Associations, by this means, a large degree of control over both the cost and the emphasis of national projects.
3. It gave a specific and recurrent opportunity by which to affirm the substance and the spirit of national affiliation.

The ready acceptance of this plan of minimum support by the great majority of Associations indicated that it rested upon a genuine need and was in keeping with the co-operative obligation implied by association for achievement of certain worth-while ends. If it represented an institutional aspect of the experience of fellowship, it also offered opportunity to supply substance to otherwise general and sentimental attitudes existing independently of such implementation.

A further comment, by way of application of the Chapin outline of institutional "type parts" to the Y.M.C.A., relates to the code of stand-

ard qualifications built up over many years for admission to professional recognition. This set of qualifications was authorized by both the national professional body, the Association of Secretaries, and by the National Council (and by various professional and field sub-groupings) as controlling admission to the Official Roster of Secretaries, and as the criteria of personal selection recommended to the separate local Y.M.C.A.'s as employers. It served, as professional codes seem always to do, to make more rigid and permanent the accepted grouping of professional workers in Y.M.C.A. service, and to make them more concerned than formerly about questions of tenure, compensation, growth, career, retirement, etc. Through this code, elements and arrangements were introduced that have undoubtedly tended to institutionalize the Y.M.C.A. Secretaryship as such, and to require caution lest these group interests predominate over qualitative improvement of services among the members and comity between community agencies in respect of joint planning and shared objectives.

This attempt to review certain aspects of Y.M.C.A. institutional behavior in terms of the Chapin analysis of nucleated social institutions has proved rewarding. It has suggested many areas within which adjustment may be considered; and has isolated the factor of property as of special significance in defining institution, and in distinguishing the attitudes and behavior patterns from codes, formulations and symbols (9, pp. 358-398). It has further indicated the foundational character of these attitudes and behavior patterns. If there is to be any institutional modifications, it must begin with these.

#### IV. CAN INSTITUTIONAL ADAPTATION BE CONTROLLED?

Unless it is possible, at least to some degree, to direct adaptive processes toward desirable outcomes, the course of social development must remain wholly fortuitous. Institutions are both symbolic and functional elements of social process. The methods by which they are built up may be utilized for modification. If they are significantly personal, they may become significantly purposeful as well. Intelligence and social understanding, rightly applied, may result in the significant utilization of institutional structure for social advance.

What grounds exist for believing that adaptive process in such a social organization as the Young Men's Christian Association can be so controlled as to ensure survival and further development on the basis of undoubted current utility? Is there any basis for the further hope that intelligent control at timely junctures may even allow the Association to become significantly instrumental for types of social change appropriate to the evolution of democratic culture in America? Are not the resistant forces, within the organization itself, as well as outside, too formidable?

In the preceding sections of this chapter, the fact of adaptation has

been examined at various levels—in the member, in the member group, in the local voluntary association, in the great association itself. Everywhere there is evident change, by processes that in individual and group manifestation may be fairly clearly understood. It is a process possessing time significance, since accepted modes of action must be tested by repeated preference, recurrence and persistence before they can become institutional. Where many groups, associations, and communities are involved, time is also essential to the manifestation of spreading power and continuity. At many stages of this process of selection, utilization, extension, confirmation, and establishment intelligent intervention is possible, by both direct participants and others, to affect ultimate outcomes through acts of choice.

This discussion accepts that the freedom of the individual, although far less than absolute, is genuine and real. As an experiencing person, his behaviors include innumerable reflections, meanings, preferences, and choices, each of which tends to modify both situation and participant and, of course, others who may then or later share in their manifestations. In the course of such participation, it becomes possible for such a person to see the emerging situation itself more clearly, to understand its factors better, to grasp possible alternative implications and courses of action within it, to choose among these certain ends or preferred outcomes, and to develop, by himself or with others, certain appropriate means for attaining these. In this way, persons who make up the groups and associations composing the Young Men's Christian Association are the necessary and competent agents of adaptive change at all stages and levels of institutional expression. The nature and direction of such changes will depend upon how the persons who are participants at any stage or level value the existing manifestation and appraise the existing or prospective social need. These represent variables that can be affected by enlightened awareness.

That there is a contingent factor in experience, as in all nature, cannot be denied. Professor Dewey recognized as one outstanding fact the "evidence that the world of empirical things includes the uncertain, unpredictable, uncontrollable, and hazardous." (53, p. 42) The existence of these does not prevent control, it only makes complete control unlikely. In the attempt to direct adaptive process toward desired ends, control must be seen as relative, contingent, diffuse in its incidence, serial as to time, yet none the less potentially real.

How then may control be applied purposefully toward an agreed end? Is authoritarian control implied, or likely? It would carry the present discussion beyond its immediate purpose if attempt were made to enumerate all of the possibilities that exist for applying intelligent control to the complex life of the Young Men's Christian Association. The observations that follow, however, attempt to bring into relief certain particular considerations likely to be involved in any serious effort to give conscious direction to its further development. The im-

mediate discussion will be limited to the enumeration of these considerations. Their fuller implication requires more careful examination in relation to the theme of the final chapter.

1. Every person or relationship in the entire contact base of the Association is at least potentially a point where some form or degree of control may be initiated.
2. As individual members differ from each other, so the groups which they compose differ, and are likely to differ materially in respect of field of interest, measure of agreement, readiness to take action, desire for representative voice, and the like. Thus differing, the occasions when all eligible groups in any given Association, or in the larger Association Movement, will wish or be ready to register their views on an issue related to control must be relatively rare.
3. Methods of informal group relationship, representative conference, and deliberative assembly are themselves subject to modification, representing as they do a phase of institutional process. From time to time, by formal announcement and delegated authorization, attention may be secured upon major structural arrangements such as the adaption of a general code of relationships, a constitution, a plan of raising support, or an extensive canvass of points of view on some aspect of policy.
4. Research procedures, and the application of processes of continuous audit, can sometimes provide Associations with the factual basis for realistic appreciation of some tendency, condition, or need; and, when they are so informed, the will toward improvement. By themselves, the facts may not lead to action; emotional concomitants may determine how facts are used.
5. Imitative process, or the desire to make a good showing, serves to support minorities in many groups and Associations that are thus enabled to dramatize the desired course by reference to what has been done elsewhere. The wide-spread publicizing of what is considered "good practice" amounts to accrediting this type of experience and so stimulating imitation, or the desire to excel and win recognition.
6. Tactical choices are numerous. The decision to bide one's time, to trust to evolutionary drift, or to seize the right moment for challenge or action, are familiar as tests of courage and foresight at all levels. The skill required to formulate issues in terms appropriate to each level is a test both of the leadership and of the poise and ability of the group.
7. Choice of constituency itself becomes a major area of choice. The constituency incumbent at a given time has come into being as a result of previous decisions, programs offered, views held, approaches made. The relatively rapid replacement of

individuals in the membership would indicate, however, that some changes of the actual type constituency might be made within the limits of the community itself. Deliberate efforts to broaden the composition of constituency have been resultful. Modifications of existing facilities, programs, and established projects, have been used to secure new constituents and resources.

8. Methods of extension have sometimes offered variable factors that permit some control of direction and quality of what the Association seeks. Insistence or lack of insistence upon costly modern building equipment may become a determining factor as to whether some communities and some youth ever have direct contact with the characteristic ideas that the Y.M.C.A. represents. The extension of constituency from the young men's group throughout the age range and among women and girls suggests frequent acceptances of an all-inclusive conception of constituency as against one more selective or restrictive in character. The conception of adjacent areas provides a possibility of broadening out from areas now occupied in constituency, in program, in typical impact.
9. The degree to which democratic processes shall be employed provides at every level a test of the educational outlook and social faith of those who function on these levels. If authoritarian control is sought by those in influential positions, locally or nationally, a semblance of institutional modification may appear to result. Even the tacit acceptance of such control would in itself signify a fairly mature stage of institutionalization. The potential readiness of rank-and-file constituency to assume responsibilities beyond their immediate purview suggests, however, that increasingly the issue may be one of proper method rather than one of deliberate thwarting by those at the moment in authority.
10. Validity of what is done, at any time or level, requires a basis for judgment. It is assumed that such validity must be tested in broader terms than merely what facilitates the continuance of the organization. Current utility must be verified in terms appropriate to the general field and nature of the service with which the organization has been previously identified. In the case of the Y.M.C.A., this field is defined by the needs of youth. Responsible leaders and group participants at all levels will be obliged at frequent intervals to seek authentic insight into these needs as they change; and to use this information as both the subject matter of their program and the criteria of adequacy of what is done. These are tasks well within intelligent understanding and progressive decision.

11. Accountability for the financial and other resources in good will that have been vouchsafed Association leadership, at whatever level, requires that there be prudent administration of capital moneys given in large part by an expectant community, and of current funds subscribed primarily by participants and users. The education of donors to support timely variants in program and emphasis affords opportunity for modifying the tendency to inflexibility that sometimes prevents accepted and heavily endowed features from yielding with sufficient promptness to novel projects that have grown up around newly apprehended needs.
12. In view of the heavy stake which the entire community has in what is done through any given agency for a part of the total need, it seems incumbent for those affiliated with it always to keep alert to its relative position before the community. If its services tend for any reason to become restricted to a special group, particularly those who are economically privileged, it becomes ethically necessary that some consideration be given to the means by which those not so favored may also be equally served. Extension of its own efforts, consultation with other agencies perhaps better able to render this service, and solicitation of public authority and resources represent possible methods of attack—all of which present opportunity for reflection upon which wise modifications of attitude and practice may rest. The weighing of the advantage of greater concentration of effort and resources over against trying to be "all things to all people" may invite courageous restriction of the scope of agency enterprises in the interest or more adequate service within a chosen area of work.
13. Growing interdependence of social and economic life, in every community and in the national community, invite the most painstaking examination of the principle or basis upon which decisions of policy regarding co-operative planning and evaluation of services should rest. Likewise, the nature of agency distinctiveness and sovereignty requires objective consideration. Willingness to decrease or yield to other organizations needs to be balanced against the potential contribution to be made. Institutional forms of corporatism and the vested interest of leadership and donors require appraisal in the light of their intrinsic value, equally free from prejudice of a proprietary kind and from the opportunism of those who desire always to start *de novo*.
14. In a group association the duration of which extends beyond the life-time of any given person, control may need to be understood in some respects, as serial control, and at times as control

by ideas rather than persons. In serial control, there may conceivably be something of a dynastic quality resting upon authoritarian assumptions. In the field of religion, it is sometimes said that the "mantle" of one leader descends upon another. More frequently, there appears to be a true succession of ideas, by which one leader comes to enrich and fulfil what was basic in the work of another. Groups at all levels have the occasion, if not the necessity, at such times, to judge shrewdly concerning what it is that is really worthy to be carried forward, implemented, or fulfilled. In so doing, they have opportunity to achieve emancipation from the more personal aspects of a regime by freeing the essential values in it from the institutional scaffolding that appeared to carry it.

In these ways, then (which are intended to be suggestive rather than exhaustive) those concerned for the usefulness of such organizations as Young Men's Christian Associations may work for their timely adjustment to the changing needs of youth.

They may thus modify or make more representative the very constituency with which they are at work. They may remake the very aims which guide them. They may continually revise and enrich their program. They may thus extend their contacts, and multiply the communities in which they carry forward their work. They may build, rebuild, or even outgrow their buildings as they may change and improve other structures. They may merit and receive financial resources beyond their hopes, and accept gladly the obligation to account fully on the most objective standards of evaluation. They may accept the strength of formal identification with the great churches, enter heartily into co-operative planning with other community agencies, and establish a social policy that courageously places the organization's resources in personality and money in the forefront of those who work tirelessly toward the Good Society.

They *may* do so.

It remains to examine with as much objectivity as possible what issues must be faced by the Young Men's Christian Associations if they choose this course.

## CHAPTER IX

# INSTITUTIONAL ADAPTATION AND THE FUTURE

THE Young Men's Christian Association faces an undisclosed but alluring future. It has contact with American youth. It is actively at work in nearly all of the principal cities of the land, and in hundreds of smaller communities. It is firmly established, generally speaking, in the local community life; and enjoys a substantial measure of supporting public opinion and good will. More than a quarter of a billion dollars of capital sources have been placed in its hands for the service of American youth. In each recent year there have been more than 40 million dollars of current expenditures. These are indeed large resources; and, if applied with intelligence to the task of helping youth to find its place in a program of Christian social reconstruction, may conceivably become a highly influential factor in American cultural history.

The past, it is said, is prologue. Upon the stage of each new present, the events of successive futures press with dramatic intensity. Institutional tendencies provide elements of continuity by which transition from the past into an ever-unfolding future is achieved. They are the carriers of the characteristic genius of an association into an ever-changing environment. Therein, by innumerable episodes, both serial and concomitant, the established and the novel are accommodated one to the other.

Experience, in respect of time sequence, is both summary and anticipatory. Consideration of the consequences of an action brings the possible future into the present, just as due regard for previous experience relates what is past to a possibly better future. The past of an organization may be viewed without glorification and without apology, since it cannot in any wise be changed except as its continuing elements are modified, in each new present, toward some desired objective. If it is possible, at least to some degree, to make some current choice of directions and to exercise by this method some measure of control, the nature of the future development may to such extent be controlled also. Effort to this end thus becomes rational if not obligatory.

If there is the possibility of a measure of directional control, and if certain means are at hand by which objectives can be clarified, future developments may be to some extent forecast on the basis of what now

is. Institutional patterns have much to do with the estimate of what is probable. They do not appear so much to determine outcomes as to condition effort. They require to be seen frankly as established and survivalistic forms, and, in so far as they may appear to impede timely adjustment to new conditions, to be dealt with forthrightly. The final result necessarily depends upon many other factors not directly involved in the institutional sequence. The outcome itself is necessarily contingent in character.

If, at the present juncture, the broader directions of desirable Association development can be clarified, and accompanying operational processes understood, there is at least the possibility that advantageous adjustments may be made without undue delay.

If, as Robert and Helen Lynd have said, "the most hopeful tendency in contemporary research in the social sciences is the viewing of sharply defined problems against the widest possible setting in the entire institutional world in which they operate" (21, p. x), the same logic would imply a similar time perspective for any problem or organization involving significant continuity. Henry Adams felt that it was necessary for any historian who wants to "keep his alignment with past and future to cover a horizon of two generations at least." He continued,

If he seeks to align himself with the future, he must assume a condition of some sort for a world fifty years beyond his own. Every historian—sometimes unconsciously, but always inevitably—must have put to himself the question: How long could such-or-such an outworn system last? He can never give himself less than one generation to show the full effects of a changed condition. His object is to triangulate from the widest possible base to the furthest point he thinks he can see, which is always far beyond the curvature of the horizon. (1, p. 395)

In the present study, the attempt has been made to take account of both of these points of view. Institutional behaviors of the Young Men's Christian Association have been examined in some detail in terms of both organizational setting and the wider social culture of which it was inescapably a part. Criteria of what modifications may be desirable are thus necessarily drawn from both the organizational life and the culture. What is appropriate to the wholesomeness and continuance of the fellowship is of obvious importance; but it attains significance only as it appears valid in terms of the most embracing social norms thus far determined by the human race.

In addition, in the present chapter, the future is also envisaged. And by the future, following the perspective of Henry Adams's figure, is meant, generally speaking, the probable life-time of those who are now the younger lay-members, and of those who are now newly entering the professional service. These young leaders are now in their early twenties and of course rarely, as yet, in any considerable degree of con-

trol. But they have the future with them; and, if they face it wisely and courageously, they may indeed live to see those timely adaptations of long-standing practices which will result in larger and more continuous effectiveness.

It is not uncommon for those who attempt to understand the long-time functioning of social organization to reach the conclusion that a substantial part of their contribution is to be seen in their pioneering rôle: that is, in the number and social value of specific services or emphases which, after demonstration within the organization, become the normal function of some other agency or of the public itself. Were one inclined to look for such instances in the history of the Young Men's Christian Associations, it is probable that many of them might be found. Association leaders are sometimes fond of taking credit for this or that now widely practiced feature, such as the night school for vocational education, the gymnasium, the short-term finance campaign, etc. Whatever validity such claims may have, it is the intention, so far as this volume is concerned, to let others make them. Growth of organization by and through loss of function may be significant, though probably dependent upon the specific conditions involved in each case. The broader social application of any technique or insight first demonstrated in a private voluntary agency is cause for satisfaction, not regret, and for continued efforts to improve its quality under whatever auspices. In the present chapter, this relationship is not stressed. Emphasis is placed, rather, upon the issues and processes that are undeniably within the immediate purview of organizational life and, therefore, such as present both opportunity and obligation.

In proceeding to set down certain issues, on the basis of the studies reported in preceding chapters, the author attempts to point out certain dangers in such a way that interested intelligence may recognize in certain typical situations their dangerous characteristics and thus be better prepared to avoid them. In defining such dangers, related institutional patterns may be taken into account, and methods of adaptation previously described given operational content. The author does not, of course, assume the rôle of a prophet; but he may be permitted, on occasion, to express his hopes.

Courageous and hopeful leaders need to take account of dangers that exist in certain crucial areas such as the following:

- Organizational integration
- Constituency
- Youth needs
- Democratization
- Building concentration
- Program standards
- Economic controls

## Social policy Leadership

What dangers arise in these areas, particularly those deriving from institutional tendency and mentality? To the consideration of some of these dangers the discussion turns. Of few, if any, of the issues can the discussion be held conclusive. Upon most of them an experimental approach will be desirable. In a sense, the items listed are actually a catalogue of unit study areas that has emerged from what is really a reconnaissance study of the Association Movement as a whole or at least a preliminary survey.

### 1. *Organizational integration*

*There is the danger that the Young Men's Christian Association may not be able to achieve sufficient actual cohesion to enable it promptly and effectively to apply its great resources to its equally great opportunities.*

*Issues.* It would be difficult indeed to name an issue upon which it could be assumed that the million and more members of local Associations or the local Associations as such would stand solidly together. Localism and individualism of affiliation and outlook have produced relationships far more atomistic than cohesive. It is sometimes assumed that authoritarian methods and discipline are essential if widely separated individuals and groups are to think and act together. This is not necessarily true. That the view is so widely held may be due to failure to apply democratic methods of education, discussion, advocacy and opinion-gathering to the real issues involved. At its very source, the basic conception of affiliation may lack any suggestion of social purpose or group action. An essential aspect of institutionalism lies in its conventionalizing affiliation too largely at a more personal or consumer level, and too little in terms that evoke member initiative and corporate concern.

Any genuine unity, whether local or national, of all individuals affiliated with Y.M.C.A.'s has thus become largely a fiction. In general, the earlier chapters of this study reveal few if any instances, after the earliest decades, of serious attempts to deal directly with the membership as a whole on any consideration; or to solicit or anticipate directly from it any point of view or expression as to what its interests, concerns, or contributions to policy might be.

Group inter-relations within and between Associations have usually been formal rather than dynamic. The appearance of inter-club councils in local Associations has marked the advent of a promising instrumentality devoted thus far, unfortunately, more to routine matters and clearances than to fundamental aspects of policy or to the community

Local Associations, advantaged naturally by sense of attachment, proprietorship, and responsibility *within* the local community, have been on the other hand disadvantaged by the limitations of a localistic outlook that failed to understand the more general influences shaping the modern environment of youth, and to appreciate adequately the necessity for a common strategy. The survey of Association development has revealed from the earliest beginnings much confusion and even conflict as to the ways by which fully responsible local organizations might have useful and effective inter-relations. Conflicts ensued lasting many decades regarding the suitability of various types of field groupings, such as state, interstate, national, system-wide (railroad) and other groupings. Attention was centered upon the form rather than upon the purpose of these relationships; and loyalties became highly emotionalized. Even the National Council of the past fifteen years, which was designed to provide a working unity based in the local membership, has appeared to become a somewhat static structural pattern unsuited in representation and method to reflect the Movement's most promising insights and programs for meeting social need.

Among the more dynamic expressions of group inter-relationship in the present Y.M.C.A. should be recognized such examples as the National Young Men's Council, The National Council of Student Associations, The National Hi-Y Fellowship, and the Y's Men's Club movement with its own international outreach. These instances illustrate a readiness for direct relationships on a national scale (and to some extent international), which does not appear as yet to have been given adequate organic recognition by the parent body, the National Council itself. To that extent, therefore, these more recent expressions are, until the present, centrifugal in nature. They illustrate a long-evident tendency in the Y.M.C.A. to establish new structural forms for timely variants, and the difficulties attendant upon embodying them in existing structural relationships.

Similarly, the movement among the professional workers in recent years toward greater unity among the constituent groups of their professional organization, though not as yet fully achieved, represents a dynamic development of significance. There is some evidence, however, that the effort to improve the status and standards of the Association's professional services may be endangered by lack of due consideration of constituent group attitudes, or lack of appreciation of technical specializations which lie behind some of them. In any case, it would appear that any development that could be interpreted as a step toward the isolation of the professional interest and expression from the total life of the organized Movement must likewise be regarded as essentially centrifugal. Such a tendency only emphasizes the extreme difficulty of achieving any true organizational integration in the American Young Men's Christian Association of the present day.

Yet it can scarcely be doubted that such integration is necessary if

sufficient actual cohesion is to be achieved to enable the Association to take itself in hand, to choose its course, and to apply its great resources effectively to the opportunities that it faces.

*Patterns.* The complex issues that have been briefly reviewed involve several of the basic patterns of institutional behavior discussed in Chapter VII. If the national structure is involved (p. 249), so also are the very bases upon which the local constituency itself is affiliated today (p. 232) and the means by which they establish local organization (p. 245) and program relationships (p. 237). The aims of groups and of the local organization as well as the stated aims of the total Movement (p. 235) are involved. Back of any existing lack of effective organizational integration may be seen these strong and persistent relationships and procedures whose modification in some degree is necessary if actual integration is to be worked out. Can this be done?

*Adaptation.* That a certain degree of adaptation of existing institutional patterns is possible though they be of long standing, has been shown in Chapter VIII. The discussion of adaptive process had made it clear that the method of adaptation is fundamentally one of re-education, and one the outcome of which cannot be brought about quickly. So basic would be the re-educational process necessary to achieve the degree of integration suggested that the question might arise as to whether it lies within the genius of the Association Movement to undertake it. Reassurance on this point may be seen in the degree of readiness of local members and groups to secure broader affiliation, often independently of existing structures. It is therefore believed that a substantial degree of integration could be brought about within the experience of younger leaders now active if certain conditions of leadership to be discussed later were met. It is also conceived that education among local members and groups should be paralleled by skilful formulation of issues and revision of procedures at the level of certain field and national relationships. Re-interpretation will also be necessary as to the significance of and method of securing consensus.

So to suggest the process of accelerated adaptation must, it is insisted, not be confused by any authoritarian assumptions, nor by fear of direction from any single source. It would rather be adaptation by consensus—a process of corporate choice based upon participation in concerns of moment both to the member in his individual capacity and in his associated relationship. It is conceded that this suggestion assumes an essential unity between what is of concern in one community and in the national community in this age of interdependence. It is possible that such interdependence makes logical and necessary a more direct liaison between the local affiliate and the projection of his natural and legitimate interest into wider field and national enterprises. Forms of *national* membership and registration have been employed in certain other relationships such as the Church, labor, fraternal bodies, and certain social work organizations. Perhaps Y.M.C.A.'s should consider

the possible utility of such devices as one means of providing a more definite and permanent identification of the individual affiliate with the more inclusive expressions of his concern.

*Observation.* All considerations taken into account, it may be considered doubtful that the Young Men's Christian Association will experience any marked shift in point of view regarding the local member and his rôle in the national Movement. The atomistic influences seem at present to be strongly in the ascendancy. Drift and inertia are on their side. The omnipresent tension and swift movement of American life enervates all, and tends to prevent the reflection within which corrective tendencies readily generate. Yet such corrective and unifying development may in due time appear and under its influence, leadership and readiness may unite to re-establish the content of affiliation in programs of action based more upon social need than upon consumer interest.

## 2. Constituency

*There is danger that the Young Men's Christian Association, in assuming to appeal to an all-inclusive constituency and to serve the whole community, may scatter its efforts unduly; that it may identify itself too exclusively with particular economic groups in the community; and that it may disregard the limitation inherent in the selective character of its essentially Protestant identification.*

*Issues.* Shall the Association continue to try to be all things to all people? Starting as a work "exclusively for young men," it has gradually extended its affiliations upward and downward until few are too young or too old to fall within the acceptable age range. The more recent extension of participation to women, at best a development in line with the growing sense of shared relationships between sexes, at worst a concession to expediency, has served to confirm the long-prevailing conception that this Association cherished a hope to become all-inclusive. Also, leaders have too often assumed that the organization could fairly include, represent, and act for the whole community in relation to the concerns of youth. They frequently overlook the limitation inherent in its historic Protestant character.

It would appear likely, however, that the Association cannot safely continue to rely upon this assumption of an all-inclusive function. The necessities of a high quality of service to any part of a given constituency appear to make doubtful any attempt to apply to all types of persons a standard as yet only imperfectly attained anywhere. It would seem that greater effectiveness may be expected from a policy of appropriate restriction rather than from indefinite extension. Many more agencies are at work today than in the days when the assumption of all-inclusiveness arose. Public opinion, even when particularly cordial, is rarely

willing to look exclusively to one point of view or approach for the social guidance of its youth.

Increasingly, public agencies such as the schools and playgrounds have joined in full partnership with homes and churches, as trusted instrumentalities of progressive and civic social education. The Associations might well attempt, therefore, to find a logical and practicable basis for restudying their strategy of contact and affiliation. By gradual reconstruction of emphasis, rather than by abrupt termination of any contacts now existing, the Associations might then seek to concentrate their interest and resources among those sections of the community population where by genius and experience they may reasonably expect to render their most significant contribution.

It appears that this limitation of constituency might be accomplished in various ways; such as by shortening the age range appreciably, or by accepting some partitioning of the community area; or by concentrating even more sharply than heretofore upon a somewhat clearly defined economic group. In exploring any of these possibilities, economic issues of much importance arise. The younger age groupings provide the larger portion of the present membership, but at lower fees. Membership dues and fees have aggregated roughly one-fourth of the operating income in recent years. Failure to reach the budgeted expectation would seriously affect the total financial structure. Hence, much importance attaches to securing more members at higher rates. Yet those who pay such rates are both older and of somewhat higher economic status. In the same way, any suggestion of limiting quickly the area of coverage is met by the fact that buildings are usually located in the economic centers; and to a considerable degree serve to concentrate the membership within short distances. Moreover, the policy of neighborhood penetration, now strongly urged (especially in work with boys), discountenances further concentration of Association work in buildings, though building memberships and patronage are necessary if these facilities are to be offered at all.

It is therefore sometimes assumed that powerful economic reasons bind the Associations inescapably to an essentially middle-class constituency. That this may prove to be increasingly true is entirely possible unless in time it appears justifiable once again to concentrate more largely upon work among young men whose usual ability for self-maintenance, at however modest level, might allow a reasonable operating income based on actual cost. It is not assumed that work for boys need or should be curtailed. It is assumed, however, that work among women and girls would not be greatly extended until there is a clearer experimental result by which to guide policy in an admittedly complex area. Nor is it assumed that the suggested concentration of constituency implies discontinuance of existing Association buildings and their services.

If the Association does not attempt to be all-inclusive and so to

represent the whole community, it follows that, as an agency working among a part of the community, it would be prepared to work with other agencies co-operatively toward more adequate total coverage of community need as a whole. This it should be able to do without loss of identity. Any real uniqueness the Association may have would necessarily be represented by what the Association's members themselves collectively stand for. In the outlook and purpose of current constituency, therefore, rather than in recorded historic deliberations, the true purport of the Movement may be found.

*Patterns.* Clearly any serious attempt to modify the existing constituency of the Associations requires an understanding of the institutional attitudes represented in the patterns established around the selection of constituency (p. 232), the nature of accepted aims (p. 235) and community relationships (p. 262). Attempts to clarify adjustments desired need to be accompanied by an effort to understand the framework of accepted procedure or stereotypes. The emergent aspects of the collective experience take form around the attitudes that have survived and been confirmed in individual habits and associational structures. These structural patterns are naturally complex and interrelated. Associated with them are undoubtedly numerous minor and secondary patterns. Whatever the overt aspect, it should be remembered that such patterns are primarily functions of the experience of individuals, and are modified only as individual leaders and members change their interests and attitudes.

*Adaptation.* Of the three major patterns referred to, the Association itself may deal most directly, of course, with its own aims, and its own constituency. Through processes of conference and reference, and through rate structures or methods of interpretation and solicitation, or even through the location of its buildings, the Association may assemble a type of member personnel suited to its conception of its broader rôle in community life. That local Associations will show extreme variation in their respective judgments about aims may be assumed. Yet it cannot be doubted that in time clearly outlined alternatives can be identified that provide the basis for choices in which a growing consensus regarding modification may be reached.

Adaptation of patterns having to do with community relationships may be dealt with less directly by the Association itself. This is because it is far less in control of the elements that compose them. The attitudes of other persons and groups not a part of the Y.M.C.A. must necessarily have much to do in determining the total relationship. Such persons and groups are largely beyond the reach of Association initiative.

Yet in its very method of determining whether it will participate, and how it will participate in some of the more inclusive forms of community co-operation, the Association can contribute toward significant emerging community patterns. These, in turn, exert reflex influence upon existing organizational forms. The Association can also modify

its own institutional attitude by securing essential facts about the community, and utilize these fresh appraisals of social need as criteria of its own effort. In the same way, it can examine with generous appreciation the work and methods of kindred organizations, and seek to apply the best standards attained anywhere to its own activity. It can thus equip its leaders and committees, and also its members, with information and appreciation from which, as informed citizens of the community, they may proceed more intelligently to apply their organized resources with discriminating sympathy.

*Observation.* Social forces are rapidly bringing the Associations into a more co-operative temper. The reconciliation between joint planning by agencies and the full realization of the contribution of each agency has not as yet been achieved. Diversity of constituency is reflected in lack of focus of constituency interest and in a diffused impact.

### 3. Youth Needs

*There is danger that the Young Men's Christian Association will so view its obligations to traditional religious aims that it may fail to understand the hopes and needs of modern youth, and accordingly fail to offer terms or enterprises challenging to youth or significant for their own future.*

*Issues.* In contrast with the conception of earlier years, when the principal concern of the Association was with the securing of individual commitments to the Christian life, the realization has steadily grown in recent years that religious living and interest are so gravely conditioned by the total social experience that the two cannot be dealt with separately. This is not to suggest that any less importance attaches to the individual's religious philosophy or purpose, but only to recognize one of the essential elements of its content.

It is sometimes assumed that organizations as such accumulate great wisdom, and that these accumulated attitudes and beliefs are endowed with great authority. Many assume such authority, in regard to theological and related matters, to exist in the accumulated pronouncements, canons, and attitudes of the churches. The great dogmas of the Church got their formulations chiefly, to be sure, in medieval or, at any rate, pre-industrial times. Such formulations typically illustrate institutional tendency; that is, they are persistent thought forms existing in the attitudes of believers and followers. It thus follows that the emphasis in theological thought has been upon the assumed body of truth to be believed, preserved, and handed down for its own sake. Although it purports to represent the eternal needs of mankind, there is no assurance that this body of belief will take any adequate account of the specific present needs of youth as such, nor of the way in which they are affected by marked changes in the culture.

It may not be assumed, therefore, that an organization such as the

Y.M.C.A., though it has addressed its energies for nearly a century toward meeting the needs of youth, is necessarily free from the type of institutional tendency that largely imposes what has been experienced and believed in the past, and too little derives from current factors in the experience of the youth with which it has contact.

In the recent study of the American Youth Commission, representing an intimate picture of the attitudes and relationships of more than thirteen thousand youth (7), it was found necessary to report in terms of such areas as youth and the home, and the school, youth at work and at play, youth and the Church; and the attitude of youth as to the adequacy of wages, the functions of government, problems relating to suffrage, to drinking, to war, and the "youth problem" itself, especially as relating to employment, education, and recreation.

In all of these areas, it was found that American youth have really significant and urgent problems whose solution was deemed significant both for themselves and for the future of democratic society. It often occurred that the problem was located not so much in youth itself as in the organizations and arrangements society has provided for the education and care of its youth. Especially in the fields of locating self-maintaining work, education, religion, and recreation, were these problems deemed acute. Re-examination of all such arrangements was considered urgent.

The Young Men's Christian Association also faces a similar need. Only by constantly restudying the life and problems of the youth it touches can it be assured of appreciating the incidence of unusual social trends which sometimes, as economic conditions in recent years have done, affect youth with particular intensity.

The Association, being historically devoted to a religious philosophy of values and relationships, is under particular obligation to relate this important heritage to the realities that youth in modern society face. The dislocations and disillusionment of recent years cannot be met by dogma of any sort, though many would seek to do so by discipline.

Here then is a significant area closely related to the characteristic genius of the Y.M.C.A. It has long identified itself with youth. It has been generally classified as a youth-membership organization. More than 60 per cent of its members are twenty-five years of age or under. It has valuable experience in interpreting religious motivations in practical terms. It may appropriately, as a youth group, attempt to formulate and articulate a philosophy and practical program of action that unites religious insights and loyalties to the concrete issues confronted by youth eager to play their part in sustaining and enriching the basic values of American democracy.

*Patterns.* In considering such a rôle, the Associations and their groups confront one of the most firmly fixed patterns of institutional behavior in the whole gamut of established structures that define the Y.M.C.A. It relates to its long-time identification with American Prot-

estantism and its characteristic modes of thought (p. 265). By this identification, accomplished and continued naturally through choosing a constituency (p. 232) and accepting the aims (p. 235) of persons who were a part of traditional Protestantism, the Associations sought to espouse the essential truth of individual freedom in matters of faith; but found they had also accepted the individualistic conception of social obligation tinged as it was with economic individualism as well (27, pp. 51-82).

To recognize that this has taken place is not, of course, to suggest the abandonment of Protestant affiliations, even if this were possible. Instead, the recognition should make Association leaders and groups cognizant of the patterns that underly their current ways of thought, and should encourage them to work with those tendencies in organized Protestantism that seek to evaluate, redefine, and reinterpret the function of religion in individual and group action.

*Adaptation.* Redefinition of religious obligation must always begin with the individual. Groups of younger individual members who keenly sense the tension of social adjustment and who retain their idealism form a natural locus for experimentation in this field. Leaders sensitive to the anomalous disparities between formulated religious principle and group conduct may work helpfully with member groups to test the reality of the effort. These first efforts will often be sporadic and fugitive. There is a value in concertedness of effort and in impressive recognition of such concerted effort. There may be, at certain stages, a significant place for formulation by assemblies, locally and otherwise. Intelligent adaptation of the underlying patterns involved cannot come by simply drifting. The true relation of religious thought and worthy conduct for youth today is not to be taken over complete from the past, nor imposed from without. It will have to be discerned afar, in all of its searching new implications for individuals, groups, organizations, and for society itself; and made real largely from within.

*Observation.* Perhaps no existing agency has more reason than has the Y.M.C.A. to try to help American youth to achieve a true and dynamic synthesis between ancient verities and their embodiment in intelligent Christian citizenship. Frequently Associations are "challenged" as to their willingness or readiness to serve in this way, as if the issue were one of courage or blame. A certain degree of organization penitence is occasionally salutary. Primarily, however, the problem becomes one of clear understanding of the desired goal, and of the kinds of specific steps called for.

#### 4. *Democratization:*

*There is danger that the Young Men's Christian Association may too long neglect to ensure democratic participation in control by the local Associations and their groups, by youth as such, or by all economic groups in the constituency.*

*Issues.* The preceding discussions of constituency and youth needs bear directly upon the issue of democratization. The basic principle here involved is that of representation. When constituency is accurately and proportionately represented in any authority or administration, the arrangement may be said to be democratic. In the Young Men's Christian Association, especially through the structural device set up at the time of the organization of the National Council in 1924 (see p. 147), this principle was recognized and applied only in part. It was sought, at that time, to ensure that local Associations as such be represented in proportion to their member strength in the national policy-making body. Their strength was calculated solely, however, in terms of the number of members. It took no account of their characteristics.

The plan took no account of the uneven conditions obtaining locally in the matter of choosing representatives. It was almost inevitable that those would be selected who were already in prominent positions of lay and secretarial leadership. Junior staff members were never chosen, but only executives. Promising younger laymen were rarely selected. Youth were conspicuous by their absence. Since many different neighboring Associations were frequently grouped by districts for purposes of rotary selection of representatives, the chances for being acquainted with or choosing obscure younger participants became negligible.

The foregoing comments relate primarily to democratization at the national level. They reveal how dependent such representation is upon organizational practices at the local level. For here, also, it was very recently (and the instances are still few) that one could find any definite channel of relationships between the organized groups among youth constituency and the actual control of policy. Within the best example of clubs and other forms of organized groups, significant processes of training for participation in self-government were evident, but these were infrequently utilized in arrangements between groups, or between the activity group structure and its sponsoring authority. It was pointed out earlier (see p. 182) that in a study of 9,459 members of local boards of directors only 4.3 per cent were below thirty years of age. The development of experiments with local inter-club councils and junior boards is significant, and may prove promising if definite relationships are worked out with the supreme bodies of control.

It has been pointed out, in the discussion of organizational integration (p. 310) that some of the younger groups are actually creating nation-wide structures of their own outside the primary structure of the Association Movement. Whatever grounds for encouragement these developments may represent, it appears to supply significant evidence of failure on the part of the structure of national organization to accommodate itself promptly to the emergent democratic interests.

If youth, as such, has not been effectively represented, the same has been true of constituency of lower economic status. This is not to say

that a younger man of superior personal worth might not, in the course of time, win recognition on merit. Frequently, however, one test of merit would be his ability to succeed according to prevailing patterns, which usually meant to make at least a moderate success economically. Representation in Association activities may have included a certain, though minor, proportion of members of lesser economic status; but economic or organizational factors served effectively to prevent the incorporation of their points of view and experience in controlling bodies.

From the foregoing it is concluded, then, that little beyond a half-way attempt has been made to apply the democratic principle in the Association structure at any level. In some instances, Associations have shown fear of such attempts. The failure to apply the principle consistently and whole-heartedly constitutes a major issue at the present time. At no point is it more so than in regard to labor policy. A recent report on employment conditions among Associations indicates an almost total lack of representation of workers in determination of wage standards and conditions of work. As for "representation," this report recommended "procedures for locating, airing, and promptly settling grievances and dissatisfaction are essential. Every employee should have a right to a hearing whenever requested either in his own behalf or through any representative or representatives of his choice." (164, p. 1)

*Patterns.* Underlying this failure and possibly explaining the rather half-hearted attempt to democratize the life of the Association may be seen patterns of institutional conduct that have persisted. The relation of financial controls (p. 255) will be discussed later. Such controls are not only strong in themselves, but highly emotionalized as well. Yet, given clearly recognized aims (p. 235) and leadership of vision (p. 258), confidence in democratic processes might be greatly increased. Many persons today are ready to invoke authoritarian leaders and ready, even eager, to endure their strenuous discipline. They assume that democratic processes are likely to be aimless and unproductive. The Association clientele, whose very existence is based upon the application of the voluntary principle, can look with confidence to so basic a process if once it be applied completely. By incomplete or half-hearted application, the ascendancy of quite other types of patterns, usually authoritarian in character, is likely to result.

*Adaptation.* Until aims are clear, little further effort can be intelligently applied. What can be done to re-examine aims, and if necessary reformulate them, embodying modern content? Aims are the joint possession of all who share consciously, in almost any terms, in the associative process. Any group that plans ahead a program of activity (especially after deliberations, however rudimentary), makes a contribution to the composite aims of the organization as a whole. Not only does each group's resultant experience condition it and its members for each new associative experience, but it may possess a pattern value for

other similar groups as they come to know of it. Both member groups and council or board group may thus, by group deliberation, clarify and advance the larger aims of the Movement as a whole. If these deliberations are authentic studies of current youth attitudes and social need, the resulting contribution to the total conception of purpose and direction will be significant.

It is a function of alert leadership to understand and define such processes and to help them to function. Leaders of groups or of organizations need to regard highly the processes of such appropriate deliberation as well as its content.

At the national level the same democratic principle can be applied. The scale is grander, the process more complex, the difficulties considerably greater. But they are not insuperable. The function of leadership is to overcome these, particularly at those points where emergent aims are in need of full freedom of expression if they are to be caught sight of at all. If this does not take place, there is no rechecking or renewal of aims, and as a result traditional formulations are invoked as a form of institutional idolatry, though not necessarily followed.

At the national level leadership in an association with a history like that of the Y.M.C.A. must accept responsibility as the ethical guarantor of democratic process. This is intrinsic in the nature of the organization and the function. In particular, leadership will consider whether existing structural or representative forms circumvent or deny this principle. If so, competent leadership will work toward adjustment through making the essential issues clear, and through articulating them through group process. It should be ready, also, to devise and innovate new structural arrangements if necessary.

*Observation.* The structural pattern of the National Council does not, at the present time, provide for, and certainly does not result in democratic participation, on the basis of parity, of most of the dynamic youth interests of the Y.M.C.A. It exhibits types of control that sometimes deny the democratic principle. It takes no account of the strong tendency to select representatives of a generally characteristic economic outlook, and tends to support the description of the Y.M.C.A. as a middle-class agency. In these respects, the national structure reflects and heightens local tendencies. The superficially democratic structure of the national organization rests upon an undemocratic foundation. Recent tendencies in field reorganization appear in most instances to show the same weakness.

##### 5. *Building Concentration*

*There is danger that the Young Men's Christian Association may continue to permit the programs and needs of its buildings to dominate its approach to its constituency; and that it therefore may fail to attract and enlist groups beyond immediate access to its buildings or unable to afford their services.*

*Issues.* Previous references have been made to the influence of the location of the Association building upon the selection of constituency, and of the tendency to deny participation in the Association's work to communities not able or ready to provide standard buildings. The extension of Association programs into rural areas through formal county organizations, district organizations, and Hi-Y extension, although a considerable development, must be regarded as a far less prominent method of contact than the typical building approach to the field as a whole.

In local communities, moreover, the presence of a standard building has been previously shown to tend to concentrate activities and contacts at the building itself to the neglect of contacts and types of work suitable to special neighborhood needs in other parts of the community. A further effect of such building concentration has been to make leadership more dependent on building equipment and resources, and less dependent upon the inherent resources of groups and upon the already existing resources of the neighborhood. To some degree, also, the failure to meet with and develop the neighborhood resources in the neighborhood setting has resulted in taking elsewhere interest that might be applied redemptively near at hand under a vigilant social policy.

These considerations by no means condemn the use of attractive modern buildings by Associations, but only point out some obvious dangers inherent in their typical use.

Since building services are generally available to members at something less than actual cost, and therefore require subsidy, it is apparent that some recognition has already been given to the limited economic capacity of parts of the constituency now served. It is customary also to provide some special services at higher rates to those able to pay for them. In addition, however, there are many community groups of somewhat lower economic status not sought or reached by Association building programs. It may be said that the proportion of work for "the under-privileged" must always be limited if the Association is to hold its "regular" constituency; and that in any case other agencies are better suited to care for them. These attitudes reflect once again a building-centered outlook and a readiness to maintain present selective contacts without marked change.

*Patterns.* The discussion of the institutional concept of the standard building (p. 252) has been somewhat detailed and need not be repeated here. The long-continued tendency to construct such buildings around the mistaken fourfold conception of personality will be referred to under a succeeding section. The bearing of the prevailing institutional outlook regarding constituency (p. 232) has also been noted. Points of view about the community and its needs (p. 262) are immediately involved in any problem relating to buildings, whether in their type and cost, their location, their use, or their maintenance. In

all of these patterns the expression of the Association's institutional tendencies is particularly strong.

*Adaptation.* Adjustment of the distorting influence upon constituency, program, or community relationships of a high degree of building concentration becomes a task particularly of managing boards. Frequently they are so composed as not readily to lend themselves to this type of examination. Having responsibility for sound business operation of a plant already on hand, such boards naturally tend to view all proposals in their relation to continuance with minimum disturbance. The responsibility then devolves upon leadership to take account of other relevant considerations, and to see that program committees and policy groups also take account of them. In fact, staff and board contacts with Councils of Social Agencies, Community Chests, and the like make it almost unavoidable that the considerations and issues mentioned above receive reminder if not serious attention. An increasing number of community surveys in recent years, covering all agencies, offer real opportunity for examination of the relations between policies, facilities, and constituency in both agency and community relationships.

*Observation.* The capital investment of the Association movement in this country is reported at about 250 million dollars. It consists chiefly of Association buildings. They were made possible by the community itself, usually by fairly wide-spread participation in giving. Thus, in source, actual cost, and in the conception of the Association itself, such buildings constitute a powerful anchorage in the *status quo*. This influence toward stabilization, it has been pointed out, is by no means a complete disadvantage. It has, however, some very real dangers.

## 6. Program Standards

*There is danger that the Young Men's Christian Association, in emphasizing continued extension of its services among enlarging numbers of participants, may fail to appropriate and apply experimentally the insights and experiences from education, religious education, social work, and the basic human sciences, and thus fail also to sponsor Christian character-building programs of unquestioned validity.*

*Issues.* If, as has been previously argued, Association programs should center in actual youth needs as against traditional formulations of religious aims, it is equally true that they should have the kind of validity that comes from experimental insights and sound methods of education. The application of modern insights from the basic human sciences to the problems of conduct is a demanding technical process for which mature and competently trained leadership is required. Under the most favorable organized school situations, experiments in progressive education have shown the very real difficulties that obtain in so con-

trolling conditions and methods as to realize satisfactory character outcomes. A science of group education is only emerging.

The great danger of Association programs lies, perhaps, in their attempted comprehensiveness, and in the resulting superficiality. Misled for many long years in assuming that human personality could be conceived in terms of a fourfold composite, the Association program makers appear scarcely yet to have sensed the significance of its integral character; or to have devised programs that accept and enhance its essential unity.

Programs under Association auspices must be content to have only relatively brief contacts with the constituency served. At most but a few hours each week are available during an actual duration of contact which may not exceed a year or two. Each individual is, at the same time, a participant in many other relationships, some of them more vital. The very casualness of the contacts with many, including those served on an individual basis, prevents assuming that they represent any very profound influence.

It need not be doubted, however, that even casual contacts may lead to quite important results, particularly among the young, if really wholesome personalities are provided for leadership. Such leaders, serving usually on a voluntary basis, are hardly to be expected to be aware of or to apply with discrimination the still elusive results of progressive educational experimentation. Under skilful supervision, to be sure, such leaders may be coached to employ good educational procedures. They cannot be expected, however, to use such individual analyses as are common in social case work or guidance programs, nor, unfortunately, always know when to turn to others competently trained for such services.

The educational advantages of self-governing clubs and other group programs are many; but none is of more significance than their voluntary character. Yet this advantageous circumstance may offer substantial difficulties in the matter of securing the necessary continuity and control. Validation of programs requires a degree of both.

As a result of these circumstances, Association programs appear frequently to exhibit two chief dangers: (1) a tendency to unlimited extension of contacts, based on interest appeal; and (2) an unwitting disregard of the procedures and processes of evaluation necessary to establish unmistakably the effectiveness of what is done. As a result, standards or program norms have only recently begun to emerge, and general application is still to be made. The end of a long epoch has come—one in which programs were often judged by the quality of intention or purpose of those conducting them. In the new epoch now opening, the appraisal will be more specific. It will seek to measure the actual results of procedures employed by means of techniques that have emerged in the application of scientific procedures in related fields.

*Patterns.* Underlying existing Association programs are numer-

ous institutional patterns, some of the more important of which are: the type of constituency already selected (p. 232); the forms of local organization utilized (p. 245); the status of existing standards in kindred community agencies and of their attitude toward improvement (p. 262); the concrete aims avowed and practised (p. 235); and the criteria of social effectiveness (p. 267) applied. If the issues listed represent real problems, these established procedures define the nature of the issues, and locate at least some of the places where modification should be sought.

*Adaptation.* Preceding discussion in this chapter has indicated the approaches suggested toward adaptation of Association constituency and aims. It is believed that, through sound program processes and wise emphases, a significant development of each may be achieved. The significance of social criteria for program effectiveness should be merely mentioned here for discussion later. In the local Association organization, the desirability of a more effective partnership of youth has been urged. If this be attempted, it will be seen to involve not only the voicing or voting of rank-and-file member attitudes in decisions affecting policy and program, but also the education of these members to self-criticism and to progressive participation in evaluation processes. In progressive education, group interest can be led to express itself both by participation in what is done and by evaluating its quality. Progressive Association leaders would find rewarding some carefully planned experiments in the rôle of members and member groups in the definition and application of standards.

Increasingly, the practices of related programs among other agencies invite comparison. In earlier years the competing claims of community agencies lacked an adequate and objective basis in fact. Such a basis is only now being developed. Many Associations, pleading special motivation or other distinctiveness for their work, withhold the very co-operation which would lead to significant comparison. For such Associations, this issue may become the occasion of a genuine modification of established attitudes regarding community obligations and relationships.

*Observation.* The attitude toward standards has changed in recent years from the consideration of rigid minimum practices regarded by some as the entrenchment of mediocrity because they restrict maximum effort. Progressive standards are expressed through experimental and descriptive means and largely in operative terms. Such standards carry an appeal to others to test their outcomes and validity, and tend to become accredited practice. Under the title *The Standards Study*, the National Board of the Young Women's Christian Association has developed a notable serial study of standards in terms of administrative practices and relationships the essential elements of which would be widely applicable in many other organizations, including the Y.M.C.A. (73)

## 7. Economic Controls

*There is danger that the Young Men's Christian Association continue to offer its membership and program service along lines that require a large financial base; as a result, it may become too largely dependent upon the vagaries of the business cycle and be forced to yield to the claims of expediency in respect of choice of constituency, maintenance of control, and the determination of policy.*

*Issues.* It is often said that endowments anchor programs to a bygone age. It is also sometimes assumed that frequent intervention by those who are relatively powerful financially constitutes a large factor in the policies and management of organizations such as the Young Men's Christian Association. It is assumed that donors of buildings, though rarely single individuals, retain by tacit influence, if not by overt suggestion, somewhat substantial power to approve or veto. It is widely believed that transportation and other industrial companies retain a substantial part in all program and policy determinations in the Associations at work among their employees. This control, it is assumed, is accomplished both through formal representation in boards, through substantial contributions toward current operating costs, and sometimes through systems of auditing and fiscal control.

It is undoubtedly true that these types of economic control are to be found in certain situations, though they are perhaps a somewhat less significant factor in the total Y.M.C.A. enterprise than is frequently supposed. It is probable that two other aspects of economic control far exceed these more direct aspects of economic authority. These are: (1) the general attitude on economic matters that has grown up among the type of persons that Y.M.C.A.'s tend to select as their typical constituency; and (2) the operation of the business cycle. Before looking somewhat more carefully at these major aspects, however, a brief further comment is necessary on the common assumption just described.

In every community are to be found a few individuals closely related to the economic resources of the community, and who become influential in all decisions that affect these resources, whether economic or social, whether intra-community or beyond. Such individuals invariably are close to, if they are not actually related to, the principal business, industrial, and banking agencies of the community. Because these agencies are always expected to contribute liberally to both capital and current costs of community undertakings, the views and sponsorship of such representatives are sought eagerly by enterprises requiring any degree of private financial support. Their personal participation may be secured in various community chest and other board and committee relationships where policies are set up and budgets determined or allocated.

So long as programs are devised that seem to require facilities and

expenditures greater than the constituency served can be expected to pay for fully, it is inevitable that such representatives of powerful economic sources should have a part in at least the decisions relating to expenditure. It does not follow, however, that theirs should be an exclusive prerogative. It is essential that policies and budgets emerge from consideration of needs, first of all by the constituencies most affected. Their point of view should be taken into account, along with others representing the community need as a whole and the particular objectives of the individual Association concerned. If the balance between strong economic resources and total organization policy is not a real one, the resulting state of imbalance may present a major issue in the organization's relationships to the meeting of community needs.

Where strong industrial corporations sponsor and contribute to Association work among their own employees, sometimes in buildings erected for this purpose on their company property, a somewhat more complex type of control results. Such programs are, from the standpoint of the companies involved, a part of their own "welfare" programs. Such programs emerged, in earlier years, in part because the Y.M.C.A. itself, as previously described, became officially interested in the general conditions surrounding the work of young men in industry, and sought improvement on their behalf. Because such co-operation by the companies was justified on the basis of values returned in good character and the added contentment of workers (and perhaps some contribution of religious stimulation to morale), the Associations typically accepted such company objectives as their own. These types of co-operation largely antedated the more extensive welfare programs that certain industries have carried on in recent years, for which these earlier programs were often patterns. In few instances, if any, could the welfare programs under either type of auspices be considered as out of line with the prevailing policy of the companies supporting them, just as these policies were generally harmonious with public opinion. But it should not be assumed that, inevitably and in all instances, the exercise of such control was designing or sinister. It was, and is, often a reflection of the deepest personal good will and concern by the industrial management. Such attitudes are obviously often paternalistic; yet the resulting benefits to workers are often sound in themselves and fruitful to all concerned.

For the Y.M.C.A. serving in such circumstances, the issue is undoubtedly whether it shall long continue to work as an integral part of a paternalistic regime. It might elect, rather, to stake the continuance of its contacts and services among such workers upon the interest, contributions, and control of the workers served. If, as seems undoubtedly to have been the case, the paternalistic system in industry was closely related, generally speaking, to a low-wage scale, it would appear that the marked advance of the general wage rates offers, for really the first

time, a valid occasion for complete review and perhaps reorganization of policy (129).

In respect of building donors previously referred to, it has long been customary for building campaigns to approach the largest possible number of potential givers (p. 91). Amounts given naturally vary greatly. Controls, if exercised at all by those who have given very large amounts, probably far more often represent the widely prevalent outlook of typical Americans of the times than specific pressures from particular individuals who seek to insist upon a policy to their liking.

Nevertheless, though economic control in the field of the Y.M.C.A.'s industrial relations have been significantly influential, they constitute only a relatively minor aspect of the total situation. For the total problem of economic controls arises from broader and more impersonal conditions. Two such aspects mentioned earlier may now be discussed briefly.

In discussing the specific issues involving constituency, as in the preceding reviews of the historical periods in Chapters II to V, it has been apparent that the prevailing ideologies of economic individualism, so widespread in American life, were accepted without criticism by those who came under Y.M.C.A. influence, and who rose to participate in its leadership. It was quite natural, therefore, for the typical Y.M.C.A. behaviors to correspond closely to prevailing economic thought and its relationship to social control. It has been mentioned repeatedly that the Associations typically represented the traditional Protestant church mind in this respect as in others. So pervasive and potent was this control, down to the present, that the acceptance of any degree of planned relationship between economic power and social need is still regarded with suspicion if not alarm. The issue is, then, for the Association to determine to what degree it is to seek to emancipate its programs from undue control exercised from without and within in the interest of perpetuating the general *laissez-faire* economic system.

The operation of the business cycle was referred to as a second major factor of economic control upon Association affairs. Manifestly this must have been the case wherever Associations operated plants the patronage from whose services represented an important part of the Association's annual income. On the upward trend of the cycle, the larger patronage of Association residences and cafeterias made for a basis for expansion which, on the downward curve, was subject to enforced retrenchment. The Associations have reflected for half a century, though usually belatedly, the main outlines of the business cycle.

Today, the issue for the Association is whether it may be possible in any way to lessen the effects of marked business changes upon its programs, methods, and personnel. Undeniably the expenditures that its work entails should be expanded rather than be curtailed in times of great unemployment, when the social need of youth is so sharply aggravated. To a private religious education agency, the device of

supplementation by public moneys and control seems unacceptable. Private contributions and income from the fees of the membership are bound to decline in such times.

*Patterns.* In examining the question of economic controls, considerations of fundamental import are involved; for to a marked degree the economic factor has set the principal terms of many of the related patterns of behavior that have been established. Three groups of patterns appear to have been involved. Financial patterns (p. 255) are closely related to long-accepted points of view about buildings and their services (p. 252). Behind these lie firmly fixed conceptions about economic responsibility associated with the free traditions of American Protestantism (p. 265), a constituency drawn largely from that tradition (p. 232), and community conceptions of philanthropy and social amelioration based upon it (p. 262). Finally, this particular kind of constituency is itself confirmed in custom and outlook through conceptions of social policy (p. 267) congenial to its own experience. This issue of economic controls will test severely any presumption that adaptation of such powerfully established behaviors can ever be brought about.

*Adaptation.* It seems unlikely that the Associations, any more than other agencies in the social structure, can ever hope to avoid the tremendous effects of major economic changes. The acceleration and interdependence defined by certain major studies, such as *Recent Economic Changes*, or *Middletown in Transition*, have implications that are both direct and indirect, and for the most part nation-wide in their bearing. The Associations could, however, if they so chose, seek to support in public opinion, in industry, and in government those points of view that may seem to challenge the inevitability of the business cycle itself. Through processes of member group study and action, they could conceivably work toward such efforts at control, realizing fully that the best efforts to date to devise a formula appear to have fallen short of both claims and hopes.

In seeking so to deal with the characteristic changes in current economic conditions, Associations may come more intelligently to criticize and evaluate the widespread general economic outlook of *laissez faire* associated with the traditional economic individualism of this country. They will thus be helped better to understand the peculiarly close identification of the Association itself with that tradition and the need for courageous review of the fundamental assumptions upon which it rests.

It is highly improbable, to be sure, that the entire local membership would in any instance rise, as one man, to demand a particular course of action. But individuals may take initiative in securing the concern of others, group opinions may form, and these may in time become the basis for formulations of what is desired and for programs of action. In his discussion of the rôle of the sect in the social behavior of the church, Dr. F. Ernest Johnson has suggested a parallel that allows for legitimate minority group interests to win recognition and to function effectively

in meeting social need in advance of the readiness of the whole membership to admit the need of doing anything about it.

Any serious effort to revise the existing economic controls at work in the Young Men's Christian Association will doubtless need to await some clearer formulation of the Association's social policy; for in this area its traditional religious assumptions and current social conditions must be brought to common terms.

*Observation.* The evident present-day relativism in moral and ethical thought makes it easy to accept a similar relativism in the field of economics. For all have some part, large or small, in the wishes and demands that determine both. No system of social living may ignore the economic factor. Few are able actually to control it. Each person and organization in society has an economic stake, as well as a moral one, in the system by which economic necessities and social welfare are sought to be related. Associations of persons holding moral aims ought to exemplify in their own affairs experimentally the most enlightened relationship of economics and social need they can devise. They ought also, in proportion to their contacts and influence, to seek aggressively to guide broader inquiry and experimentation along lines that will put the economic resources of an increasingly interdependent society at the disposal of the social need it creates. The question may be raised as to whether leaders dependent for current income upon the continuance of conditions of support such as have been outlined above can work effectively for social change. An affirmative answer can be given only within limits. Without the connection of responsible employment, reform, if there is to be any reform, must come from without or through the accident of lay interest. Without funds, employment must cease. It is possible for employed leadership, given social awareness, to work well beyond the area of conventional acceptance toward a constantly widening circle of appreciation of social need. Skilful leadership in the voluntary association will utilize every immediate opportunity, however small, for a significant advance in social understanding and liberal policy, preferring this method of progress to that of challenge, protest, and withdrawal frequently associated with an uncompromising absolutist position.

#### 8. Social Policy

*There is danger that the Young Men's Christian Association may fail to clarify among its constituents, locally and nationally, its characteristic conception of current social need, especially as affecting youth's welfare and future; and that it may too long delay the formulation of a positive philosophy and policy of action in relation thereto.*

*Issues.* The content of social policy in an organization such as the Y.M.C.A. derives perhaps more largely from the symbolic character of

its service and its significance as a whole than from any particular formulations. Yet there is always the possibility that this wider symbolic aspect (e.g., the characterization of the Y.M.C.A. as a middle-class organization) may be modified in one direction or another. A static position is to a large degree untenable. Even the "trend of the times" moves the total situation forward more rapidly than highly institutionalized organization practices are modified. This tends, in effect, to leave the institutional forms outmoded. Organizations need, therefore, to keep alert to salient new aspects of the swiftly changing social milieu, especially those that affect their immediate typical field of activity.

In the Y.M.C.A. resistance has been shown over the years to any authoritarian type of control over local Association activity, and even resistance in some quarters to a minimum degree of integration necessary for social effectiveness. Such attitudes tend to question the entire concept of having any common policy. This view is undoubtedly closely related to the individualistic outlook previously described, and to its counterpart in the phenomenon of localism. Men and Associations mistrust over-arching conceptions and commitments: they fear the danger of distant controls. In the grip of such fears, the very conception of democratic determinations is lost.

Yet the great forces shaping the culture of America, of which urbanism is certainly one, extend far beyond any local municipality. Local policies and ordinances may have unique aspects, to be sure; but these are hardly more than minor variants in the total pattern of the culture. Communities like Middletown appear to have all of the principal elements, and reveal most if not all of the significant social problems, of modern American life. Not only in the similarity of the problems, city by city, or city and country, but also in their characteristic inter-relatedness throughout the nation, lie the real grounds for a common policy, whether for the nation itself, or for any organization working among any nation-wide constituency. At least in the clarification of the nature of social need at any given time, and of the principal issues raised by it, there is a basis for collaboration. Programs of appropriate action may be trusted to emerge as a later stage.

Delay in attempting so to clarify what is deeply believed by the Association constituency regarding social need may have important consequences for the Association's thought of itself. For the very genius of associational relationship lies in common interest. If Associations attempt to maintain their sense of significance on other bases than those that seem most urgent and real, the foundation of any sense of group meaning disappears. If they attempt, on the other hand, to maintain a sense of significance on the basis of some preceding condition or interest, the attachment becomes shallow, tenuous, vestigial. Attempts to invoke authoritative controls avail nothing at such times.

If any kind of efforts are to be made to stir the Association mind as a whole from lethargic indifference or a sense of defeatism regarding

social affairs, it may be hoped that patterns of social education found productive in other organizations will be carefully examined. One such pattern, the open platform, has become a popular method of social education for more intelligent citizenship. It should not have become necessary for Y.M.C.A.'s to rediscover this long-known method, nor to try to accredit it as a novel method for Association programs. That it was believed necessary so to reassert its place in the social education program of the Y.M.C.A. is evident from the National Council recommendations to this end in 1931 and 1933, and from subsequent actions of the same type. In many quarters this attempt was regarded as quite radical, and counted unwelcome. In some Associations, the very principle of an "open" platform was denied. But these efforts, on the whole, marked an advance toward a definite social policy. A further advance may be made around the issue of keeping the open platform unquestionably open.

Another advance involves methods of dealing with public affairs as they emerge. When the National Council formally authorized its own Public Affairs Committee, in 1935, a significant step was taken away from the long-adhered-to practice of not dealing directly with social issues that fundamentally affected the Association's own membership and its own organization. This Committee, and similar committees in field and other relationships, represented a growing sense of responsibility for helping members to have some opinion upon the chief social problems of the time. Suggestions as to objectives for local effort in various areas of social need were offered. Yet the implication of this effort was very largely one-way. It was directed toward facilitating thought among local members, but not toward any formulation of particular kinds of policies *within* Associations as such nor, through these, for the Movement as a whole. A further issue, therefore, is as to whether the Associations should not accept responsibility for participation in the formulation and revision of policies dealing with social conditions that bear directly upon the social needs of the constituency with whom they deal.

Under all the conditions, Associations cannot reasonably be expected to reach too far forward toward problems and solutions in advance of the state of public opinion, though, indeed, they have done this in certain other areas. But they can hardly be excused, it would seem, from having some real share in the development of public opinion and public policy when the American people face such necessities as they do today. Far from traditional aloofness regarding matters once termed "controversial," the Associations should seek to bring into play such experiences, contacts, and resources as their associative experience may contribute.

*Patterns.* In attempting to formulate a social policy for the Y.M.C.A. organization as a whole, well-established attitudes and procedures would undoubtedly be involved, and would probably be resis-

tant to such attempts. Some of these sources of resistance might be the historic position on the autonomy of the local Associations (p. 245); the historic avoidance of any specific formulations (p. 267); the inarticulateness for today of long-standing formulations of aims, and lack of specific content of many of the more recent formulations (p. 232); the assumed attitude of much of the existing constituency toward liberal social policies (p. 232); the type and method of program now carried on by Associations (p. 237); and, not least, the means by which these programs are financed (p. 255).

*Adaptation.* The processes of adaptation of established patterns have already been described repeatedly. In so far as they relate to social policy, account will be taken of the fact that, in current years as at no previous time since the Association Movement began, these issues of social policy impinge upon all citizens, and with special heaviness upon youth. This circumstance creates a readiness, even a hope, for channels by which the creative intelligence of a democratic culture may express itself in positive social action. If, by the suggested processes, desired policies once become clear, at least one chief deterrent will have been removed from the pathway of social discovery.

*Observation.* Propaganda agencies seek action without genuinely educational processes. Solutions are provided according to pre-existent pattern. Authoritarian agencies impose their solutions. Democratic associations and societies discover or create solutions out of their often confused experience, in their effort to find out what to do. Then, from this process, they are already conditioned to apply what they find. If the proposed solutions are valid, they will in time, if the social process continues, find partial if not full expression. The situation will contain novel factors, the result of unforeseen circumstances, and the outcomes will rarely correspond closely to what was planned. That these things are so does not invalidate the effort; for without it the results might have been much worse. For example, the Association's long practice of racial segregation, particularly as regards the Negro, becomes, at a time when racial antipathy has reached the stage of persecution and disaster in more than one foreign country, a matter of pressing urgency. Doctrinally disposed to democratic procedures and philosophy, the Associations must also find ways by which to reconcile their practice of discrimination against certain racial groups with their profession of Christian fellowship. Recognition of the inconsistency may become a first step toward a true reconciliation of these conflicting interests. Out of the dissatisfaction may come the stimulus for experimentation from which a type of relationship more in keeping with Christian principles will emerge (120). But the processes involved in developing sound social policy in the Association remain essentially educational processes. There is no short cut by which the full strength of associated effort may be applied without delay to any social emergency. As with education itself, the social crises of the present day, as Professor Kilpatrick has

pointed out (58), require both broadening the prevailing concept of education and the acceptance of responsibility on the part of leadership. Will the leadership of the Association accept such responsibility?

### 9. Leadership

*There is danger that both lay and professional leadership be recruited too largely from, and work too largely within, the institutional tradition; that the respective rôles of laymen and secretaries in the Association be confused or conflicting in concept and function, and perhaps stereotyped or otherwise unproductive in practice; and that the leadership as a whole continue to be so departmentalized and trained as to retard necessary adaptation of established institutional structures toward a courageous and creative approach to community need, especially among youth.*

*Issues.* The statement above gathers up many of the items included in discussing other issues in terms of the leader's rôle in institutional adaptation. If the institutional tradition and structure actually exist (and as to this there can be little doubt), the selection of leadership from within that tradition doubly insures its continuance. For in the creative possibilities of leader relations, by way of prudent initiative and intervention, lies much of the hope for associative effort. Democratic processes do not require a passive or colorless leader; nor do they require that initiative be reserved exclusively to the rank and file. It is only necessary that the rank and file have complete freedom to determine, among various choices, the course they themselves deem best. Progressive leadership can largely determine whether Associations do or do not concern themselves with the actual needs of youth, and with organizational and social programs in relation thereto. This they are not likely to do if they hide themselves behind what once was or what has been handed down, or what is, at any moment, the "accepted" way. How can leadership be emancipated?

In institutionalizing the more mature and economically well-established laymen in boards of control, the Association fulfilled the implication of their prided lay character only in part. They exalted a certain type of layman as a conservative agent, with significant relation to control; but at the same time they neglected the far larger number of laymen, including the typical younger lay member, as a creative agent, with significant relation to progressive adaptation. The Association secretaryship conformed, for the most part, to the former. It neglected, for the most part, the latter. As a result, the professional rôle in policy-making has frequently not been one of foresight and discovery, but one of faithful and usually fairly efficient pursuit of routine functions within patterns of relationship rather firmly set.

Under such circumstances, it is not strange that the respective rôles of layman and secretary have often become stereotyped and unproduct-

tive. Both parties are attached to the *status quo*. Executive attitudes toward staff innovation frequently reflect the same pattern.

The failure, in considerable degree, to derive from the long period of Association activity anything approaching a professional training curriculum until as late as 1936 suggests that training had probably long been confined primarily to coaching new secretaries as apprentices on the job, and thus under conditions that served to strengthen and further guarantee the traditional outlook. Reference should be made here to the attempts before 1890 to organize formal centers of specialized training, elsewhere described. Among these efforts, it is true, were attempts to draw from religion, education, and the sciences insights that would give a broader foundation for professional skill. But until 1935 there was no serious attempt to formulate the type of professional education necessary and to support it by formal recognition. Preceding formal action tended, rather, to relate to formal recognition of the centers of training as such, rather than to their content; and were, therefore, but another instance of sustaining the prevailing institutionalism. Grants from an influential foundation<sup>1</sup> in 1926 for re-studying the training needed by Association secretaries proved a beginning of a broader conception of the professional function (147 and 148).

Only relatively lately, then, can it be suggested that any deliberate effort was made to break away from the rigid patterns of training of the earlier years. These patterns, it will be recalled, were based very largely upon the fourfold conception of personality and program. Still more recent attempts have been made to define common program procedures and skills related to group activity carried on by certain agencies. This again may be understood as a definite part of the attempt to free the education of leadership for a social function from the assumptions of a too narrow institutionalism. An important current issue is how far it is necessary, however, to repudiate specific agency relationships and purposes in order to gain release from the grip of institutional practices carried within them.

However this particular issue is resolved, it nowhere appears certain that leadership so prepared is necessarily well-prepared to deal with the basic social and economic relationships of modern culture. Although advocates of the modern emphasis on social group work insist upon its functional importance for social action and social change, it appears to trust chiefly upon the validity of the intended methods and little upon the outlook and courage of the leadership. It appears to be counted sufficient that leadership implicitly trust the outcome of the group process. It becomes one of the most pointed issues, therefore, whether the Association Movement can develop within its processes a leadership

<sup>1</sup> In 1926, the Laura Spelman Memorial gave \$100,000 to Association College (now George Williams College), Chicago, for technical study of the work of the Y.M.C.A. secretary and training therefor.

sufficiently objective and free to respond to social need without the thwarting element of institutional resistance.

*Patterns.* The institutionalizing of leadership in the Y.M.C.A. has been defined (p. 258); but all of the various patterns elsewhere defined (pp. 232-267) also bear directly upon the problem here stated. This is true because institutional tendency is a function, first of all, of individual experience, and comes to its logical focus in the rôle of leadership. Leadership not only embodies such patterns within its own outlook, but it often becomes their vigorous protector and conservator, mistaking this for its more logical rôle, in an associative order, of creation.

*Adaptation* of leadership patterns calls for both an immediate and a long-time approach. In the latter, the training process for new leadership needs fundamental insight into the science of social relations as well as fundamental capacity for thinking through social problems. If to this be added the assurance of an unselfish attitude assumed to derive from religious motivation, it is apparent that a leadership so provided might prove equal to what is required.

Such processes are, however, so largely in the future that they offer slight hope of overtaking the problems which now press for solution. Present leadership must, as far as possible, *become* the type of leadership needed. If one may assume honesty of desire so to serve, perhaps reality might come through courageous self-examination to see how closely the primary assumptions of one's professional activity correspond with existing patterns of institutional behavior. Where present outlook and prevailing pattern do so correspond, the suggested possibilities for adaptation may be helpfully examined. At the end, however, leadership must test its motive and its competence against its readiness to deal directly, sympathetically, and creatively with specific social need.

Leader stereotypes become widely influential. Rarely indeed, if ever at all have Association secretaries been generally regarded as leaders of contemporary thought. They have more often appeared to be skilful in contact and activity. Among Association leaders at present, it is probable that the stereotype of the administrator-executive is in the ascendancy. There may be some among the younger who are disquieted by the profound distortion which they conceive this conception to represent, and who look toward the day when the secretaryship may be typically and accurately designated as more nearly the progressive educator or social engineer—with constructive Christian outlook, let it be hoped.

*Observation.* Some of the most confused and outmoded efforts to meet human need have been made by men of Christian purpose. Christian belief should at least ensure sympathetic and prompt response to human need, but it does not always do so. Enlightened Christian outlook combines the goals and spirit of Christian fellowship, at its best, with the most competent technology of method and application. Application, to be ethical, implies beginning where immediate responsibility

and normal contacts join. Enlightened Christian leadership may be measured by the attempt, within accessible areas first of all, to apply experimentally the genius of associative effort to social urgencies. Such attempts must necessarily involve both the lay board member and the professional worker. In their complementary functions, their shared initiative, and their practice of mutual fellowship, they are both necessary to any effective embodiment of the leadership rôle in organizational advance.

The charter for such experimentation is clear. The official legislative bodies of the Association gave, in 1931, a clear mandate to work for "the building of Christian personality and a Christian society." This is the strategic point where the Association leader has authorization to work. He would be lacking in strategic sense and perhaps in courage if he should fail to move forward aggressively toward these objectives. He may even dare to make them the actual basis of the fellowship held to be central in member relationships of groups if not of the Association itself.

#### IN CONCLUSION

The contingent nature of the Association's future arises in part from as yet unforeseen events to come in the world about, and in part in the unpredictable outcomes of issues such as those just described. At the base of these issues exist strong and persistent patterns of individual and group behavior, the deliberate modification of which will require exceptional skill, long perspective, and much patience. The true location of these patterns and issues is not, it has been shown, in some single high place of authoritarian control. It is, instead, in the attitudes and behaviors of many individuals, millions of them, scattered across the entirety of contemporary life. Even as these individuals locate the problem and make it tangible, so do they also carry possible elements of solution. For modification of institutional behavior begins with individual understanding.

In the preceding chapter it was insisted that the adaptation of institutional processes could, in considerable measure, be controlled. No one can possibly say, in advance, whether it will be so controlled. But it may well lie within the genius of the Association to make the needed changes. Its history reveals a considerable capacity for adaptation.

Moreover, the issues that have been defined are probably not unique to any one organization, and this broader experience of other organizations is available. Leaders, especially younger leaders, may within their own life-time realize many of the more urgent changes—that is, if they work effectively in professional groupings and with lay colleagues of liberal and constructive temper.

One thing is certain: namely, that progress toward redefinition and redirection will depend upon a clear conception of the desired goal.

One may consciously direct effort toward an outcome in which one fully believes. Assuming the Association's continuance, as a private agency, there are many possible goals. Which are worthy? How shall those who aspire to productive leadership decide? To what shall they address their energies?

The actual leaders may, of course, permit the Association to drift from decade to decade without an affirmative philosophy of its own history, of its function, or of social change; that is, without a philosophy sufficiently articulate to allow the organization to play the rôle of social reconstruction of which it may be potentially capable. This is not an alluring prospect.

Or, the leaders may be content to think of the Association as primarily and simply a service center, perhaps even the most efficient and comprehensive that can be devised. This would be understandable.

Or, they may wish to safeguard, by a spirit of exclusiveness and withdrawal, the quality of religious fellowship that they conceive to have been strong at some earlier time, seeking to minister only to those needs of modern youth that fit this pattern, ignoring others of crucially urgent nature. This would be unworthy.

Or, they may eagerly accept the growing emphasis upon informal education and recreation as embracing all essential program features, and hope therefrom to develop interesting activities of a kind able to contribute substantially to the education of a happy and useful citizenship. This would be naïve.

Or, devoted and forward-looking leaders may think they discern in the maturing sense of community a new reality worthy of absolute acceptance, and seek to merge the Association into the pattern even if loss of initiative and sense of distinctiveness result. This would be generous.

Or, they might, with great realism, seek deeper insight into the affairs of modern youth and the culture, looking far into the probable future; and utilize the great scope and variety of contacts with youth for investigation and experimentation toward fundamental social reconstruction. They might conceive this as the chief implication of the present day for the resources claimed for religion. This would be strategic.

Or, finally, these leaders into the future might conceive of their Association as a part of a true world community, above class, race or even nation, ideological rather than actual, affirmatively Christian rather than material and secular. This would be genuinely creative and courageous. Those who work toward such a community would clearly see "that we are members one of another, and that society must become more organic, mutually-supporting and in-

terdependent than it now is." (171) They would probably take note of the classless society and the corporative state as "attempts to translate this vision into reality"; but would certainly note also that "cruelty and rapacity must follow from unquestioning allegiance to a class, nation, or race that acknowledges no authority greater than itself." They would seek to discover a "basis for a community life which goes beyond differences of race, nation, or class, and takes the sting out of those conflicts which are inevitable." In short, they would work toward the realization of the Christian Community in the Modern World, tested not by theological abstractions and institutionalized bigotry, but by brotherly quest for the Good Life (24).

These are some of the choices that now confront the leadership of the Association. Which answer will the Association itself give?

The Association moves toward the beginning of a possible second century of service with the stern social necessity before it of utilizing its experience, insights, and resources for the largest good. Institutional bonds of its own creation are upon it. If these bonds result in delaying timely adjustment, in some instances, they also serve a highly constructive function in others. They offer practical means by which associated behavior may attempt intelligently to apply its significant resources to social need. Where improvised measures might easily be ill-advised or prove wasteful, they embody and order the Association's experience in the past, and make it available for fresh application in human affairs.

It is a function of intelligent leadership to examine these residual elements critically, in order to discover whether they may wisely be applied without essential modification. It is a privilege of courageous leadership to sponsor their outright adaptation so far as may be needed, or even their abolition, to meet the demands of present and future opportunity.

To leaders both intelligent and courageous this volume is offered in the confident hope that they will not neglect their day of opportunity.

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<i>Christian Journal</i>	1859-1860
<i>Association Quarterly</i>	1867-1870
<i>Association Monthly</i>	1870-1873
<i>The Watchman</i>	1874-1890
<i>Young Men's Era</i>	1890-1895
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